

DIALOGUES

BETWEEN

A PILGRIM, ADAM,
NOAH, and CLEOPHAS;

CONTAINING

The HISTORY of the BIBLE,
and of the JEWS,

Till the final Destruction of the TEMPLE
of JERUSALEM.

With which are connected, in a Chronological Order,

THE

Most remarkable Events of Profane History:

INTERSPERSED WITH

Answers to Objections, Illustrations of Difficulties,
and practical Reflections:

The Whole in a plain, entertaining Manner;

BEING

Adapted for Schools, and the middling Class of People.

With a List of the Authors from whom the Materials
have been collected.

Now first Translated from the Thirteenth EDITION,
of the Original DUTCH.

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Strahan



DIALOGUE

BETWEEN

A PILGRIM and ADAM;

Containing the space of nine hundred and thirty years.

Pilgrim. **I** Am above all things desirous, venerable Father, to be put in the way, how I may happily finish the course of my Pilgrimage; and I thought you were the fittest person I could apply to; for I understand that you have lived a long time, and, indeed, your appearance shews it. Besides, having conversed both with God and man, you must have acquired a large stock of knowledge and experience.

Adam. True, Son; I am, indeed, of a very great age. About nine hundred and thirty years have gone over my head, and I do not expect to live many years more, nor, as times are, do I desire it. Gen. v. 5. Could I have continued in that delightful, glorious Paradise, and in my first state, never should I have been weary of living; but the world is now so degenerate and corrupt, that I do not care how soon I am out of it.

Pilgrim. That is in part what brought me to you; that, hearing how you came to lose so pleasing and desirable a life, I may take warning.

Adam. Not a word more of that, Son; the remembrance of it always draws tears.

Pilgrim. You seem extremely troubled, Father; do not give way to grief so much.

Adam. Forbear, I intreat you, to afflict my grey hairs with such questions.

Pilgrim. Why so, Father?

Adam. Oh, to think! to think!

Pilgrim. Let me beg of you, Father, as I came to you for instruction, not to send me away empty. Certainly your former state must have been something very glorious, that the thought of losing it affects you so much.

Adam. No tongue can express in what a *Gen. ii. 16, 17.* sweet, pleasing manner, my Creator used to speak to me in the happy days of his love.

Pilgrim. Did you see any visible form of him?

Adam. He descended to me, his mean creature, in so much august splendor, yet speaking to me with such endearing mildness, that I never shall forget it; especially as I perceive that his favour is not so sweet to me, since I became disobedient to him. Therefore, my Son, beware of any disobedience, small as it may seem, lest the love of God depart from you.

Pilgrim. Give me, I pray, some account of Paradise: On that head we shall, another time, talk more at large.

Adam. It is impossible to give you a true representation, what a charming, delightful place it was. The trees stood in rows and full of fine fruits, of which, in my walks, I gathered what I liked. The birds leaped from spray to spray, making the garden ring with their melody; for the very animals were much more sprightly whilst their ruler kept his first state, and God held friendship with him; but now they seem to droop and sigh for his trespass. All the beasts came submissively about me, and I gave every one its name, according to its most remarkable quality; for God had *ver. 19, 20.* given me knowledge of the nature of things under me. The soil yielded a superabundance of every thing I wanted, and without any care or labour: But what I thought myself most happy in, was a female companion,

companion, which God had given me as a helpmate, and that many might partake of ver. 22. the riches of his creation. I loved her exceedingly. She was, indeed, flesh of my flesh, and bone of my bone, as I perceived immediately on seeing her. No life ever was, or ever will be, like ours in that garden; nothing but innocence, complacency, and love, passed between us; without cares, jars, or vexations, and with affluence of every thing we could desire. Then how noble and glorious were the faculties and dispositions of our minds! When God approached us, what extasies of love and adoration swelled our hearts! We were strangers to falsity and deceit. No guilt or weakness troubled our quiet. We knew nothing of any evil being in the world. We lived purely on the good which God showered down upon us, for we had more communion with the divine good than we ourselves knew. As a child is never perfectly sensible of the fondness and affection of his father, till after forfeiting it; so we, after being turned out of that delightful Paradise, then, alas! too late, began to know the infinite good we had been possessed of, whilst in it.

Pilgrim. But, Father, it seems strange that, after God had endued you with such wisdom and goodness, he should suffer you to be seduced from your Creator, to break through his only injunction, and when so much depended on it.

Adam. Oh! Son, there is no expressing what influence a woman has over a man, who has once set his love on her, especially when there is any appearance of reason on her side; and the wiley serpent used such insidious language to her, as overpersuaded her to imagine we were laid under some unjust restraint, and that we should be great gainers by following his suggestions. In short, he brought my poor wife to believe, that we should be like God him- Gen. iii. 5. self; and that his only scope, in forbidding us to eat of the tree, was to prevent our being so.

Pilgrim. Accursed artifice?

Adam. This staggered her weak mind, and concurring with her strong desire of tasting the fruit, (as, to be sure, nothing could be more sightly than the tree,) she yielded to the tempter, and ate.

Pilgrim. Sad eating!

Adam. Then came she running to me, with the cajoleries which the serpent had used to her; and I, blinded by love, and bewildered with despair at what she had done, yielded to her insinuations. I followed her wretched example.

Pilgrim. What happened then?

Adam. Immediately our eyes were open, and we perceived ourselves to be naked. Besides, every thing appeared quite altered; the little birds became shy; the beasts seemed to put on a kind of wildness; some, lowring, turned their backs on us; others threatened us; great numbers withdrew from their obedience; so that we had but few left about us. The charming sun seemed also to hide its head; the weather began to grow cold; in short, both the elements and the creatures seemed to reproach our foolish and ungrateful disobedience towards so good a Creator.

Pilgrim. What a loss, in so short a time!

Adam. These were the least parts of our misery; there is one thing—Oh! oh!

Pilgrim. For God's sake, Father, forbear such great grief, and relate to me what it is that goes so near your heart.

Adam. Oh! that ravishing look!

Pilgrim. Of your deluded wife?

Adam. No, no! the august, the glorious appearance of God, whom every morning we used to praise, who used to be all our solace and joy, now struck us with affright; and his voice, once the sweetest musick to us, became terrifying as thunder.

Pilgrim. Woeful change!

Adam.

A.M. 2. a PILGRIM and ADAM. 5

Adam. Oh! my Son, never, never sin against your God, how alluring soever it may seem, or whatever appearance of reason it may wear; for, believe me, death is the consequence of sin; out of God no life is to be found.

Pilgrim. How was it with you then?

Adam. On hearing his voice, we used Gen. iii. 8.
to creep into some thicket or cave; and could we have hid ourselves from him, we should. But it was all folly; there is no hiding one's self from God. Yet, when we stood before him, we foolishly were for justifying ourselves.

Pilgrim. But, Father, what could you plead?

Adam. We began to clear ourselves; ver. 10, 11, 12, 13.
I, by laying the blame on my wife; and she, on the serpent.

Pilgrim. Did that avail any thing?

Adam. Avail! It only made bad worse: for nothing more displeases God, than an unwillingness to confess our sins. However, God in his justice punished us, and all according to our several demerits: first, the serpent, as the contriver ver. 14, 15, 16.
of the mischief, received sentence; next, Eve my wife; then, I.

Pilgrim. And what might the sentence be?

Adam. The serpent was cursed above all other animals; my wife was to bear and bring forth children with much pain and sorrow, and, as she had made an ill use of her influence over me, she was subjected to me; and I, for not having been satisfied with the ease, plenty, and felicity of Paradise, was sentenced to earn my subsistence with fatigue, anxiety, and trouble; witness this spade, and plough, and this ver. 17, 18, 19.
yoke of cattle; and hard must I labour in my old age to support myself. The sentence of death also was made known to us.

Pilgrim. That is a grievous punishment, and all the consequence of a short pleasure! But what changes happened afterwards?

Adam. No sooner was the sentence pronounced, than we felt our nature impaired. We were seized with bodily pains and infirmities. Now we stood in need of shelter from heat and cold; ver. 21. whereas, at first, skins of beasts, given us by God, answered that purpose. The earth began every where to shoot up weeds, prickles, briars, and thorns, and these choaked the esculent good products which were to serve for our nourishment; and they, otherwise, throve but indifferently; for, instead of the kindly mist, which had communicated a proper humidity to the earth, now we had frequently violent rains, then extreme heat, so that we were very hard put to it, and in continual sollicitude. The serpent, irritated at its being debased, looked on us with an evil eye, so that here again we were in continual fear of its doing us some mischief; and not the serpent only, but many other beasts, as they all shewed a kind of hatred and abhorrence of us. Then what troubled me extremely was, that my wife, who had ever carried it with great meekness and affection, seeing herself subjected to me, began to be somewhat froward and contradictory, which gave rise to many discords. The trouble which her frowardness gave me, was worse than all the labour of my hands; yet, as her husband, and still retaining a cordial affection for her, I visibly sympathized with any pain or sorrow of her's. Oh! Son, time would fail me to tell you the several changes, in body and soul, which our transgression brought on us; and a most afflicting subject it is to me to talk of.

Pilgrim. I should have thought, Father, that after the sentence of death was pronounced against you, and all these calamities were coming on, you should immediately have hastened to the tree of life, and eat of it; thus you and we should have been delivered from death.

Adam. That we should have readily done, had not the wisdom of God prevented us; but it would only have proved our utter ruin.

Pilgrim.

Pilgrim. How so, pray?

Adam. Had we, of our own heads, seized on that tree, and made ourselves immortal, our case would have been no better than Lucifer's, and we had become quite past repentance and conversion: the greater our gift, the more criminal is it to rebel against God. Wherefore God, in his wisdom, observing our rashness, spread over us the wings of his mercy; and, that we might not, by our own conceit and temerity, corrupt ourselves more than we had, by eating of the Tree of Knowledge, he turned us out of Paradise.

Gen. iii. 2.

Pilgrim. Yet one would be apt to say, that life was to be chosen before death.

Adam. You know not what you say, Son. God has annexed life to himself, and graciously imparts it to whom he pleases. He who loves life, let him entirely give himself up to God; he who seeks life elsewhere than in God's favour, precipitates himself into death, of which Lucifer and all the impious are instances; instead of life they have only a death full of trouble, which they foolishly imagine to be living.

Pilgrim. So far I am satisfied, and much obliged to you for being so communicative; but there is one thing I have still to ask. You intimated some alteration in your soul. Did your fall, then, affect that part?

Adam. Yes, truly, and the change was not small; for, the delight and joy which it used to have in God, it has transferred to the perishable creature; as if a King, driven out of his kingdom, should betake himself to the meanest employments. What is still more, it has scarce any sense of its former glory. The consequence of this is, that being no longer directed by the divine light, it abuses the creatures, and is swayed by the desires and appetites of the body. Meat and drink, originally intended for necessity, are now abused to gluttony and intemperance; apparel, for covering the body, is turned into shew and vanity; the power and inclination,

inclination, implanted by God for continuing our species, are turned to lust and excesses, productive of the greatest evils in society; and, in like manner, every creature is, by the lawless stupidity of the depraved soul, warped from the true end of its creation. In Paradise we were strangers to all this.

Pilgrim. Whence might that proceed?

Adam. The soul, after its first relapse, deprived of the real knowledge of God, seeks its life in enjoyments of its own formation, as knowing no other; for, unless irradiated anew by a divine ray, it degenerates more and more, and at length becomes worse than the very brutes. Too much of this have I seen in my time.

Pilgrim. What a variety of sorrows you have gone through, Father!

Adam. Yes, indeed, Son. Should I give you a detail of the injuries and calamities I have suffered, of the horrid wickedness which prevails, it would be too sad a story for me to relate, or you to hear, without tears.

Pilgrim. I would not willingly give you any affliction; yet could I wish to have an account of your misfortunes, as I may draw some instruction from it.

Adam. Being so desirous of instruction, I will gratify you. Not long after our being turned out of Paradise, my wife was delivered of two

Gen. iv. 1, 2. sons at different times; the name of the

first was Cain, and the second was called Abel. The former, being a well-made, comely child, of him we had great hopes; the younger was of a more tender

iv. 4. frame, with something soft in his countenance, that we made no great account of

him. The elder, as he grew up, betook himself to tillage, in which he shewed great industry and laborious application. The younger, being of a quiet disposition, answerable to his look, chose a shepherd's life. He was virtuously inclined; not an unbecoming word ever came from his lips; withal, he was so courteous, mild, and good-natured, as if, by tending lambs, he had

A.M. 40. *a PILGRIM and ADAM.*

had imbibed their nature. The former unhappily began to envy his brother's endearing qualities, and to bear him a dislike, perceiving that his innocent deportment gained our affections, but chiefly when he saw that God had more pleasure in his brother than in him, his offering being re-^{ver. 4.}jected. His indignation betrayed itself on all occasions. From his childhood he had shewed himself of a hot, abrupt temper; but now his animosity appeared plainly in all his carriage and behaviour; no dutiful salutations to us; and his brother could not get a friendly word from him. His fullness filled us with terror, as concluding that he certainly was brooding some black design.

Pilgrim. But, Father, after such experience as yours, should not you have taken him to task, and seriously admonished him? for such a choleric temper is inconsistent with brotherly affection.

Adam. Alas! my Son, we were far from being deficient in that; and his afflicted mother frequently told him, with tears, what had befallen us, and intreated him to lay aside a behaviour, which was offensive to God, who never left obstinate sinners unpunished. But no advice will take effect, where a man does not watch over himself. And, what is more, God himself, in his tender mercy, dehorted him from his malignant animosity.^{ver. 6, 7.} But, oh! had it gone no farther than angry looks and a discourteous carriage—

Pilgrim. How, Father! Your grief returns on you as strong as before.

Adam. Oh! Let me intreat your silence. The thought of what followed crushes my grey hairs.

Pilgrim. I will leave you awhile to your passionate grief.

Adam. That I should live to see such a deed among my children!

Pilgrim. What, then, did you live to see, Father?

Adam.

Adam. Oh! The first-born in the world.

Pilgrim. What happened then?

Adam. Well, my Son, in regard to you, I shall relate the deplorable event. All our admonitions and intreaties could not give the least turn to Cain's animosity, but, coming up to his poor, quiet brother, as he was tending his flock, he began to storm and rage most dreadfully, in order to raise a quarrel; but that weak lamb answering him submissively, it so inflamed his brutal rage, that, laying hold of the jaw-bone of some dead animal, he felled his brother to the ground, who breathed his last on the spot, and there was left a bleeding corpse.

ver. 8.

Pilgrim. A dismal event, indeed! but what does our sinful nature stick at?

Adam. Now he had gratified his malice. But had you seen the agitations of Cain, after he had struck the fatal blow—He cried vehemently, wrung his hands, stamped; but all in vain. His conscience afforded him no comfort: He was full of fear and horror! If he did but hear a rustling leaf, he imagined it was somebody pursuing him, to revenge innocent blood. He fled from the sight of the Lord, if such a thing could be, like one utterly disconsolate and discouraged by remorse. At length, unable to bear the sight of us, he removed into another country.

Pilgrim. This, sure, must have pierced your hearts with grief.

Adam. It was indeed a heavy stroke to us, to lose, in one day, the comforts of our lives, two sons; one dead as to the body, and the other, which was still worse, lost to the soul. But when the mother saw her favourite son lying in his blood, there is no expressing her agonies; and, for my part, I was too much troubled myself to offer any comfort to her. Neither of us got the better of this affliction for many years, nor ever

ver. 25.

should, had not God comforted us with another son instead of Abel; him we called Seth;

Seth;

X How elucidative of the many domestic calamities & afflictions

Seth ; and this happened in the hundred and thirtieth year of my age. Besides his extraordinary beauty, this child was of a most promising temper. We had, indeed, many more children, but none equal to him for sense and virtue ; from which we conceived hopes, that God designed in him to found a peculiar race.

Pilgrim. Pray tell me, what became of Cain in his voluntary exile ; did he reform afterwards ?

Adam. As God gave me more children, and those children, in process of time, had others, which spread into several countries, Cain took to wife one of my first daughters, and increased his generation. ver. 17. Among other children, he had a son named Enoch. As to the poor man's reformation, of which you were asking, since the murder of Abel he was under a perpetual terror, and never thought himself safe any where ; but at last, seeking safety in human means, he built a town in the East, which, after his son, he called Enoch.

Pilgrim. Did he never pray to God for forgiveness ?

Adam. He conceived that his sin was too great ever to be forgiven, and thus never fought it. ver. 13, 14. Indeed, he often prayed to God to preserve him from violence ; for he apprehended that the first man that saw him would kill him, to rid the earth of such a monster.

Pilgrim. That is something odd, there being then scarce any people ; besides, how could they know Cain to be a murderer ?

Adam. He was not ignorant that I had more children, or at least there was a probable expectation of more ; and thus he concluded, that, soon or late, he should fall a sacrifice to their revenge. Then it is, by divine appointment, natural for all murderers to be haunted by a fearful conscience, and much more he, as having set the first example of murder ; and he could less expect the remission of his sin, God himself before having so graciously warned him, besides our daily

daily affectionate talk to him about the turpitude and evil of sin, and the beauty and felicity of virtue : But he turned the deaf ear to all we said, and persisted in his wicked course. Therefore, Son, on any enticement of sin, when you perceive the voice of God within you, harden not your heart, but thankfully attend to the salutary whisperings of your Creator, and strenuously oppose and suppress sin in its first impulses, that you fall not into Cain's misery ; for the greater the light under which sin is committed, certainly the less pardonable. Though Cain is by no means to be commended for despairing, it may, however, be a lesson to you.

Pilgrim. Did he place no trust in God ?

Adam. He so far, as I said, turned to God, as to pray that he might not be killed ; and God
ver. 15. was pleased to assure him of it, by putting a mark on him, that whosoever killed Cain should be punished seven-fold.

Pilgrim. What became of his descendants ? Were there any godly among them ?

Adam. The far greater part betook themselves to handicrafts, and were carpenters, masons, stone-cutters, and the like ; for, as I said before, Cain built a city, and there his descendents followed their several occupations. As for their duty towards God, justice and benevolence among one another, their founder, I fear, left them to themselves. His son Enoch had
ver. 18, &c. also a son called Hirad. Hirad begat Methujael, and he had a son named Methusael, whose son Lamech was the first who violated the ordinance of God, that one man should have but one wife ; but he, contrary to the divine law, took unto himself two wives, Ada and Zilla. Ada bore him a son named Jabal, a very virtuous man, and particularly was of such an humble and peaceable disposition, that, sick of the pomp and pleasure of the town, he retired to a country life, dwelling in a cottage, and
turned

turned herdsman. He had also another son by Ada, called Jubal, who, observing men frequently subject to melancholy, heaviness, and atrabilarious passions, invented musical instruments, to allay those disorders, and exhilarate the mind. By Zilla afterwards he had a son called Tubalcain; a most ingenious man for all kinds of work in gold, silver, iron, and other metals. To him, however, in no small measure, is owing the universal desire of riches, and delight in finery and shew; for he had the astonishing art of extracting gold and silver from the earth, and working them into vessels, bracelets, and the like, so that every one's fancy was smitten with them, and they were esteemed as of great value; tho' this kind of metallic wealth consists more in the imagination than its real nature. Lamech their father, in the impetuosity of his temper, committed a fact which occasioned terrible disasters in his family; but it would be too long to enter into a detail of them.

Pilgrim. I hope, Father, to hear a better account of your son Seth's progeny.

Adam. Why, indeed, of them I can speak with some pleasure. When I was about two hundred and thirty-five years old, and Seth an hundred and five, he had a son whom he called Enos; and at ver. 26. this time, to my infinite joy, Seth and some others of my family, began to preach in the name of God, shewing forth his wonderful dealings with the children of wisdom, power, and goodness; and their discourses they confirmed by the piety of their lives.

Pilgrim. What need was there of preaching? Was not God every where acknowledged? Did he no longer converse with men? Was not the creation of the world a sufficient display of his attributes?

Adam. Your question, Son, is pertinent, and very well deserving of an answer. God, indeed, had made known his name by his wonderful works, and the creation of the world was conspicuous to all. He also had
not

not totally ceased speaking to men, particularly by visions; and, in general, he was constantly speaking to mankind, by his law written in their consciences; but this being common, it was no longer attended to; for the lineage of Cain, which was now of above an hundred years standing, had by their deflections so corrupted it, that the souls of men seemed to have lost also their perceptions, all sense of their real nature and dignity; their whole study, employment, and talk, turning entirely on eating and drinking, planting, building, trading, marrying, and other concerns of this bustling life; and the heart being, by the numberless superfluities which came into vogue, dulled and darkened, nay, quite diverted from minding God's voice within them, not a few began to question whether there was any God at all; some had low notions of him; and some vilified his name, as if they would explode all reverence of him out of the world. Therefore was it, that my good son Seth's family, to suppress such impiety, openly preached the wonders of God, and, in their words and actions, testified of the glorious and everlasting name of the Lord.

Pilgrim. But Cain's progeny being so perverse and blind that they would not attend to the voice of God himself, what good effects could be expected from man's preaching?

Adam. You cannot but know, that like is most to be won by like. Do you not observe, how children are more wrought on by one another than by their elders? So likewise, though God teaches more powerfully, and has a more evident testimony in the conscience, by the creation and continuance of the world, and the occurrences in it; yet the tongue of man sometimes makes more lively impressions, especially on those in whom a reflective observation of things is extinguished; and to those who to their observation add a circumspect walk, preaching can do no harm. They rejoice to see the glory of God confirmed by farther testimonies.

testimonies. Besides, when the voice of man witnesseth the same things as God witnesses by the creation, or makes known in any other manner, such a voice of man may be called a secondary voice of God, as produced by the motion of his Spirit. So that what God teaches inwardly in the conscience by the creation, or in any other way, visible or vocal, or men inspired by him, it is all one word and doctrine; yet has each its particular use, according to the temper or capacity it meets with. One way supports and promotes the other; and, together, they form a more impressible coalescence, tending to the same gracious end of man's growth in knowledge and holiness.

Pilgrim. I acknowledge the satisfaction you give me. But has God a name by which he can be called, that your children preached his name?

Adam. You must know, Son, that God's name is expressive of his attributes; that to preach his name is to preach his attributes. He is called almighty, holy, eternal, gracious, and just; because he is almighty, holy, eternal, gracious, and just. As his essence is, so is his name. Now, according as his essence is profaned in man by sin, so far is his name debased and denied; and it is God's pleasure that his name be hallowed and glorified in man. Therefore, when we see it declining through the prevalence of sin, it becomes us to preach, and to exert all our talents in its vindication, that it may be restored to its due honour.

Pilgrim. Truly spoken, indeed, Father. Please to go on with Seth's descendents.

Adam. I had reached my three hundred and twenty fifth year, when Enos, being Gen. v. 9. now ninety years of age, had a son named Kenan, who, when seventy years old, begat Mahalaleel; ver. 12, 15. and he, in his sixty fifth year, had a son called Jared. At that time I was four hundred and sixty years old.

Pilgrim. Oh! Father, what must you have gone through in such a course of time!

Adam.

Adam. More, indeed, than would give me pleasure to tell you. I only relate some necessary particulars. Were I to give you an account of the births and marriages, likewise of the differences and broils, the various concerns which have passed through my hands; for, being the elder, it was common to come to me for advice; should I recount the great changes which have happened in the world, in the apparel, customs, and manners of men, in the very trees, waters, hills, rivers, all my inward and outward distresses and conflicts, I assure you time would fail me.

Pilgrim. One thing more, Father, I must ask you.

Adam. Well, Son?

Pilgrim. The descendents of Seth, did they continue also to preach, and to live accordingly?

Adam. Not one of them turned aside to evil, or was deterred from preaching, by any contumelious usage. They frequently used to be asking me about former times, and the works of God; and, for my part, I was glad to give them all the instruction I could.

Pilgrim. Did they, in any measure, reform Cain's descendents?

Adam. Alas! they only grew worse and worse. That Lamech, whom I just mentioned; it would astonish you to hear of his wickedness.

Pilgrim. What was it, then, Father?

Adam. Oh! It is really too shocking!

Pilgrim. Yet would I willingly hear it, if it so please you.

Adam. Besides what I told you of his transgressing the law of wedlock, he was of a very quarrelsome, cholerick temper, and it appeared but too plainly that the divine vengeance still hung over Cain's head, to retaliate the unnatural murder he had committed; and herein God always uses suitable instruments. Lamech, harbouring a secret revenge against Cain, as the murderer of his brother, one day rose up
Gen. iv. 23, 24. against him and slew him; and immediately

ately after killed an innocent young man; for wickedness, when once it gets head, is ever urging on to more mischief. However, being agitated with a dread of God's anger for these enormities, he told his two wives, Ada and Zilla, what he had done. This failed not to excite the resentment of Cain's friends, who revenged his death seven-fold; and others again revenged the death of Lamech seventy and seven fold. Such was the divine chastisement for the innocent blood of Abel; and the race of Cain has ever hardened itself against any salutary impressions from the preaching of my good son Seth's descendents.

Pilgrim. I find, by your discourse, that Cain's race is grown to a sad pitch of wickedness.

Adam. To such a pitch, that, unless God remarkably interposes, it is to be feared the infection will become universal and irradicable.

Pilgrim. I thought they had been men of parts and ingenuity; therefore it is strange they should run such lengths.

Adam. All their ingenuity lies in earthly things, as arts, building towns, improving and inclosing lands, as their own property; all which they had been taught by Cain. And as for their more atrocious crimes, as rapine and murder, they have new-fangled notions of right and wrong, besides subtilties and distinctions to palliate their guilt, and even give it a plausible appearance.

Pilgrim. A sad depravity!

Adam. Yet into such a depravity does man fall, when once he begins to depart from God, and place his delight in these sensual things.

Pilgrim. But whence, Father, comes such folly?

Adam. It is, my Son, for want of knowing God according to his glorious nature; for, with such a knowledge, there is no such thing as placing our delight in earthly creatures. Would any one, who knew the difference, throw away gold, and lay up dirt? Yet these,

through their ignorance, are become infatuated with sensual pleasure, in which, as in mire, the longer men continue, the deeper they sink, till they are at length overwhelmed.

Pilgrim. Still there are means, surely, to get out of the mire.

Adam. Impossible, whilst men are not sensible of their filthiness.

Pilgrim. How are we to come at that knowledge?

Adam. By closely observing one's self, and not opposing the divine light; for God always leaves in man some light, by which he is admonished of sin. Such admonitions my wife and I had in Paradise, before our transgression. Cain was also warned before that horrid act of his. And these are daily warned by the most affectionate preachings, and other means; but they turn a deaf ear, and thus heap sin upon sin.

Pilgrim. I perceive, Father, you mean, that he who does not amend is ever growing worse, and at last becomes past conversion.

Adam. That is, indeed, my meaning.

Pilgrim. Can man, on the other hand, by closely attending to God and himself, attain to such a sublimity of virtue, as to be ever ascending in a confidence on God, and never once more turn back to sin?

Adam. Unquestionably, if he firmly believes in God; for by faith we please God, and overcome the world.

Pilgrim. This is a happiness, indeed!

Adam. We have, at present, a man among us, who, by long exercise in the divine life, is come to such a degree of purity and heavenly-mindedness, that he is more like an angel than a man.

Pilgrim. Say you so, Father?

Adam. And no more than truth. He is so mild, so meek, so courteous, so compassionate and good-natured, and withal so temperate and upright, that the very sight of him gives pleasure. Besides, he never lets sin go without some animadversion; and his preachings
are

are delivered with such a melting tenderness, such a noble warmth—

Pilgrim. Is he certainly a man ?

Adam. As you and I. His father and mother I have known these many years.

Pilgrim. What family is he of ?

Adam. Of Seth's ; which, you may remember, I have given you an account of, till the birth of Jared.

Pilgrim. I remember.

Adam. Well ; this Jared, in his hundred and sixty second year, was blessed with this incomparable son. Gen.v. 18.

Pilgrim. Pray what is the name of this holy man ?

Adam. His name is Enoch.

Pilgrim. By what you have said, he must be no young man.

Adam. He is now three hundred and seven years of age ; for, at the time of his birth, I was in my six hundred and twenty third year ; and at the next return of the sun, now in *Cancer*, to the sign of *Aries*, I shall be nine hundred and thirty.

Pilgrim. Has he also children ?

Adam. Yes ; particularly a son called Methusalah, remarkable for his strength and procerity. Methusalah also had a son in his hundred and eighty seventh year, whose name is Lamech ; but very different is he from that sanguinary Lamech, the descendent of Cain. He may now be about fifty seven years old, and is a very discreet, well-principled youth. ver. 21.

Pilgrim. Be so kind, Father, as to tell me a little more of the good Enoch ; for my heart glows when I hear of such excellent persons. ver. 25.

Adam. From his childhood he was always very virtuous and devout ; but especially, after he came to have a son, he made a fixed resolution totally to consecrate himself to God, and serve him in an uniform course of singular piety. He frequently came to my habitation,

habitation, consulting me about many things; for his thoughts were much employed on the creation of the world, on divine revelations, and whatever has a tendency to promote goodness and the knowledge of the Deity: And when I related to him the delights of Paradise, what we had heard and seen there, and the surpassing felicities of the divine love whilst we continued in our immortal state, he would breath out the most ardent longings after such a bliss, and lament that we should still be so cold and remiss in the things of God. We have sometimes spent whole nights together, without minding food, sleep, or any thing else. How fervent his addresses to the Eternal Being! How ecstatic his trust, that he should one day enjoy him! Oh! this young man's faith shall not be disappointed. Faith brings about what otherwise seems impossible; and such are the things which are the objects of his hope. But, I must own, he takes quite another course than either I or mine have yet done; for he has laid his foundation entirely on the infinite power of God, to which all things are subject.

Pilgrim. This is an extraordinary young man, indeed. I suppose, he has not been wanting in good advice to Cain's progeny.

Adam. He has preached to them over and over, and till he has been in a perfect agony with concern; exhorting them to a due employment of their time, to repentance, and holiness of life; representing to them, *Jude 14, 15.* that in the latter times God shall come, with thousands of his saints, to execute judgment upon the ungodly for all their ungodly deeds, for their hardness, and insolent scoffs and blasphemies.

Pilgrim. This man, I find, has the gift of prophecy, and foretells wonderful things. But pray, Father, what is meant by the hardness of sinners? God is more powerful than all the sinners in the world, so that, with all their hardness, they can never hurt him,

Adam,

A.M. 687. *a* PILGRIM *and* ADAM. 21

Adam. God is an amiable, benign Being, which would implant virtue in their hearts, and dwell there with every gentle sentiment. Now the ungodly being self-willed, haughty, envious, liars, cholerick, and quarrelsome, their heart is no abode for the Spirit of Truth and Goodness; thus it becomes hardened against that word, by which they must be saved. Besides, the wicked, for the most part, treat the messengers of God, whose words are all meekness and love, with the utmost rancour and indignity. For all these things must they be chastised, thereby offending God, and shutting against him their hearts, where he would dwell in love.

Pilgrim. How do Cain's descendents relish this man's life and doctrine? Does it bring forth any good fruit among them?

Adam. They are incessantly taken up with earthly things, and, ever since Tubalcain's bringing gold to light, are so eager to be rich, that what with their building, planting, and bartering, they leave themselves no time so much as to hear him. Some, wedded to their pleasures, have a downright hatred against him; others despise him, as living in a mean, small cottage, such as this of mine, and being indifferent about his apparel. Others, again, from his retired way of living, conclude him to be eaten up with melancholy; so that his labour is lost on them. However, among Seth's descendents he is a great comfort to believers, strengthening and admonishing them, and setting them the best of examples, besides doing them all manner of good offices. When he preaches, it would give you pleasure to see the great number of men, women, and children about him, and how serious and attentive they are. Sometimes he preaches in houses, sometimes in woods, sometimes on hills, or by the side of rivers, as opportunity offers; though of late he inclines to retirement and a contemplative life, as far as is consistent with his zeal for the happiness of his brethren.

Pilgrim. A glorious man, indeed! But, Father, you mentioned mean cots. As age is now coming on you, why don't you live in such new, large, and strong buildings as Cain's progeny?

Adam. What should we, being only sojourners here, do with such costly edifices? Sometimes we dwell here, then in another place, so that to be shifting all that lumber there would be no end. We are not to encumber ourselves so much about this world. We have something better in view. We expect a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God. It is otherwise with Cain's descendents: They look on themselves as settled here, and make the world their home; and having no farther expectations, God indulges them in the enjoyment of it. Their wrong choice gives me no small concern; but we are little inclined to traverse them in it. Give us food and covering, and we are satisfied. Were my heart settled on earthly things, I might lay claim to all, as the first created, and immediately by God himself; but I hope he will preserve me from such folly.

Pilgrim. Do any other particular persons come to see you, besides the good Enoch?

Adam. Yes, my children, and especially Seth and his offspring. It would be too long to tell you of their affection and respect to me, our conversation, the points of religion and morality which we discuss, their prayers and meditations, and the unreserved friendliness and benevolence which reign among them; to dwell on all these things, I say, would be too long, and you yourself will readily imagine, how things must go between a father of my age, and a family of such children.

Pilgrim. Are all your children, then, still living?

Adam. Of all my children, and children's children, whom I have named to you, not one is yet dead, poor Abel excepted. In process of time, they have spread into numerous tribes, as you see their countries are not bare

of

of inhabitants; and some have betaken themselves into remote parts, to teach the knowledge and worship of the true God.

Pilgrim. I observe, Father, you always keep to this godly line. You have other children, and they are no more without issue than these which are ever on your tongue.

Adam. O Son, Son, what good that pious line will be of to the world is not to be expressed. We see already the excellent men it has produced, and that God seems particularly to have chosen it beyond the others, to shew forth his wonders: Nay, he has declared, that the seed of the woman shall bruise the serpent's head; and from this precious line is that seed expected.

Pilgrim. You said before, that there is an enmity between you and the seed of the serpent, and wherever you come, you bruise its head.

Adam. I must tell you, Son, you do not yet see into the mystery of the divine words. Since my woeful fall, there has indeed arisen a natural enmity between us and the natural serpent; and Cain's progeny, no less than Seth's, endeavours to extirpate them: But there is a spiritual serpent which lurked in the natural, and this is to be bruised only by the race of Seth.

Pilgrim. These are, indeed, strange things to me; but who is this spiritual serpent?

Adam. The Devil, who may well be termed the old serpent, being much older than the natural serpent; its seed is sin, and death is its victory.

Pilgrim. Have you, then, no means of overcoming sin?

Adam. We hate it, and war against it; but it is only by the seed promised to the good race of Seth, and which will be born in its time, that the head of sin will be finally bruised.

Pilgrim. Is there also a spiritual Paradise, as there is a spiritual serpent?

Adam. Undoubtedly ; for all visible, natural things have their invisible, spiritual nature.

Pilgrim. Where is the spiritual Paradise ?

Adam. As the natural Paradise was in the best part of the world, so is the spiritual Paradise in the best part of man ; who, being the chief of creatures, represents the whole world.

Pilgrim. Which, then, do you call the best part of man ?

Adam. The heart, as thence proceeds life. The culture and preservation of this Paradise was to be man's chief attention ; for into it God caused to flow the stream of life ; and that dividing itself into four capital rivers, fertilizes the whole country ; so that, with some care, it abounds in every thing that is delightful and splendid, exquisite fruits, and even fine gold and gems.

Pilgrim. I find that the keeping of that Paradise is a point of great concern ?

Adam. Had my wife and I well kept that spiritual Paradise, we should never have been turned out of the natural Paradise ; but she, poor woman, from the lust of the eye, and a hankering after the forbidden tree of the spiritual Paradise, was unhappily led to eat of the forbidden tree, in the natural.

Pilgrim. Pray, what is the forbidden tree of the spiritual Paradise ?

Adam. The tree of the knowledge of good and evil, with which some have so satiated themselves, that they have not been able to reach the tree of life ; for it is not knowledge, but a simple enjoyment of God's goodness, in which life consists. Therefore, dear Son, when the wiley serpent accosts you, and extolls that tree, as having a virtue of making you very little inferior to God himself, reject such suggestions, and acquiesce in that obedient simplicity, in which your Creator has placed you : For the knowledge of evil and good, however pleasing it appears, frequently destroys life,
the

the source of which flows solely from God, to whom a forgetfulness of every thing behind us is more acceptable, that the eyes of our minds being fixed above, we may be strengthened for growing up completely in him.

Pilgrim. I believe, indeed, that little good comes from the knowledge of evil; yet the knowledge of good seems to me, in some measure, necessary?

Adam. The serpent having brought evil into vogue, it is proper to know the good, that you be not deceived by evil. But there is something yet, which surpasses all knowledge.

Pilgrim. Do not conceal that from me.

Adam. It is love.

Pilgrim. But how shall I love what I have no knowledge of?

Adam. That love is in you; and if, for the future, you shun so much as the appearance of any evil, no matter whether you have much speculative knowledge of love.

Pilgrim. I am ever to be growing in it.

Adam. That God, the fountain of love, shall work in you, if you carefully keep and improve your internal garden.

Pilgrim. Some instructions herein, I pray.

Adam. The hedging must be close, that no ravenous beasts, as lions, bears, or wolves get in; that is, you are to disperse any proud, cruel, sensual, or vain thoughts, all the insinuations of depraved nature; you are not to permit them the least access into the soul; they will defile, corrupt, and lay it waste, devouring and destroying the young shoots of our spiritual growth, tearing up their very roots, and of that beautiful garden, make a rugged forest; and, on the other hand, do but carefully tend it, and secure the fences and doors, then every salutary plant, and particularly the Tree of Life, shall thrive in you more and more; for the genial dew of divine grace is ever shedding a rich fertility on
that

that spiritual land, that it has all the beauty and fragrance of a flowery bower.

Pilgrim. Father, I most heartily thank you for your instructions; but I conceive there must be another Paradise, or state, to which that spiritual Paradise is a preparative.

Adam. A very just conception; and that is the celestial Paradise, a state of more complete bliss, as including both soul and body; for that we last spoke of is confined to the soul; but the other is that which Enoch hopes to reach, and of which I can speak but very inadequately; but when it shall please God to send the promised Seed, full teachings shall the amazed world receive from him; in him, though unseen, I hope he shall heal the bites of the serpent; and, O my Son! he it is who will bring both you and me, after all our wanderings, to an eternal felicity; that is what I breathe after; that is the object of my most joyful hopes, from the prelibation I had of it in the terrestrial Paradise: And it is time for me to prepare for my removal hence, that I may be received into heavenly mansions.

Pilgrim. Once more, Father, let me acknowledge my great obligations to your communicative condescension; and may that precious seed give us to see each other again in the celestial Paradise.

D I A L O G U E

B E T W E E N

The PILGRIM and the Patriarch NOAH,

Containing a space of 1077 years.

Pilgrim. **I**T is now above a thousand years since I had some talk with that venerable old man, Adam, who so courteously gave me an account of the occurrences in his days: And now, awakened from the deep meditations in which I have been since absorbed, I see the world is much altered since that time. My best way to get a knowledge of the events, which have contributed to such great changes, will be to enter into discourse with one of the oldest men I can meet with; for with the aged dwells experience; whereas young people know only by hearsay. Yonder is the man for my purpose, his face shews both longevity, mildness, and wisdom. Hail, Father! God save you.

Noah. I thank thee, Son. I have always, from my youth, enjoyed God's love; never has it departed from me.

Pilgrim. A singular happiness, indeed!

Noah. Well may'st thou say so; but to God alone is the praise due.

Pilgrim. You seem, Father, to have reached a very uncommon age?

Noah. Yes; my name is Noah, and I am now in my nine hundred and fiftieth year. I can remember several of the Patriarchs of the first world, as Enos, Kenan, Mahaleel and Jared. I knew every one of them; and particularly Methuselah, who, for length of days, never had his equal, and very probably never will; for though I am within twenty years of him, I don't suppose I shall live so long.

Pilgrim.

Pilgrim. You surprize me; old age generally brings infirmities, and you seem pretty hale and vigorous. You have still a brisk eye, and your hearing, I perceive, does not fail you. Adam, I suppose, you could not know.

Noah. Adam had been dead a hundred and twenty years before I was born; but Lamech my father knew him very well, for he was fifty six years old at the time of Adam's death, and a great many good things he used to tell us of him.

Pilgrim. So it is; let a man live thousands of years, at last, I see, he must die.

Noah. Die! say rather, he removes to a better life, of which we had an instance in the blessed Enoch, who, after persevering three hundred years in a divine life, God was pleased, miraculously to take up into the heavenly mansions, whilst living.

Pilgrim. How, Father!

Noah. I tell you no more than the truth; for my father knew Enoch as well as he knew me, and was about a hundred and thirty years old, at the time of that remarkable event; besides, I have spoken with several who were eye witnesses of it.

Pilgrim. That must have been a wonderful sight.

Noah. Were I to relate to you all the great things which have been told me, as well-known truths, of that man, the sanctity of his life, his faith in God, his concern for man's welfare, his indefatigable ardour in promoting it, and his miraculous departure from earth; how some stood gazing after him; some, who would not believe it, went seeking him over hills and dales; some lamented the loss of his company; others thought it a good riddance, for he was the salt of the world; others set up a mark on the spot where he was last seen; and it has been shewn to me; the different talk of people on his being taken up, some confirming it, others denying it; I say, were I to go about relating these things, from first to last, not only time would fail me,

me, but I should be quite spent before I had got half through.

Pilgrim. I am far from desiring you to tire yourself, Father ; the truth of the fact is no question with me. But what comfort can Enoch's being taken up to Heaven be to you ? His case is singular ; for all the other Patriarchs have been removed out of the world in the natural way of death ?

Noah. It is of exceeding comfort to me. Hence we see, that there is a place in Heaven for the godly ; this Enoch himself taught, as a principal point. Again, it shews the power of faith, which can overcome death ; for our general father Adam, though, according to the body, he died, yet had he a strong sense of an eternal life. God having given him a soul, being eternal, he expected eternal things ; and a powerful solacement this was to him, amidst all the traverses of his life. That great truth which he inculcated, being confirmed by Enoch's revelation, we the more firmly believed a fruition of the heavenly glory, notwithstanding the return of our body to earth ; for it is entirely in the will of God to glorify us, either with or without it. Enoch is a proof that he can do it, if he pleases ; and from his righteousness and bounty, we, as children of the same father, expect that he will give an equal portion to all who love him. Farther, we feel in our hearts the commencement of a divine life ; and this the more strongly, as the lusts and enticements of the world decay in us. Therefore say I still, that the putting off this perishable body is only a transition to a better state ; of which God, in his time, will make a clearer manifestation.

Pilgrim. What I am very desirous of hearing, is, the transactions of past times, and your own particular adventures ; for, having lived so many hundred years, as you say, and all things being perpetually changing, you must be acquainted with abundance of strange and wonderful things,

Noah.

Noah. To give you an account of every thing which I have heard and seen, would require the addition of another hundred years to my life; for, besides my very uncommon longevity, I have lived in different worlds, and the particular recollection of some passages, I know, would overwhelm me with grief, so that I should not be able to proceed. Therefore it will be best not to say much of those things.

Pilgrim. All I desire, Father, that I may not be troublesome, is, just a general account, whence I may reap instruction.

Noah. Indeed, did I not believe that to be your view, you would not draw a word from me; but now, as time permits, I will give you a succinct account of some occurrences well worth your notice.

Pilgrim. Before you proceed in your narrative, pray who is that well-looking man yonder, with a youth, whom he seems instructing?

Noah. That is my son Sem, now in the four hundred and forty sixth year of his age. The youth's name is Abraham; and though but fifty six years old, he has an eager thirst after useful knowledge. He is very fond of being with my son, and sometimes comes to me. Then I relate to him the transactions of past times, with which he is exceedingly delighted, that he says he could listen to me for ever. You see how attentive he is.

Pilgrim. Father, you inflame my desire; they must, sure, be wonderful things.

Noah. Well, some of them you shall soon hear. At my birth, my father Lamech was in his hundred and eighty second year; and as he had been much concerned for the death of Seth, which was fourteen years before, he soon conceived great hopes of me, that I should be a comfort to him, and all the children of God. Accordingly he gave me the name of Noah, (*Consolation.*) And, indeed, he seemed to stand in need of comfort,

Gen.v. 28.

ver. 29.

comfort, being much dejected, not only on account of the perpetual toil and labour which the earth required, but rather for the lamentable growth of wickedness, owing to the race of Cain, who at that time were called the sons of men, as minding nothing but the increase of their numbers by any intermarriages, and procuring to themselves the things of this world; whereas the others, who adhered to the divine life, were called the children of God, and were mostly of Seth's lineage, as I am. These, in their successive generations, asserted the cause of God and piety, admonishing each other against the profane and sensual life of the children of men, the wretched descendents of Cain, who made it their chief employment to people and cultivate the earth.

Pilgrim. With submission, did not God himself say, "Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth?" And without tillage, how are mankind to subsist?

Noah. What you say is unquestionably right. But God having given to man a soul, cultivation, and the chief cultivation, is due to it; for our other part becomes a prey to death, as we see in beasts. Now nothing, from which more strength goes out than it receives, can remain in a state of vigour; and this is the case of the soul, when its sublime essence is neglected, for the gratification of the senses: These draw out the very pith of the soul, that it withers away; but this great injury done to the precious soul, in reality obstructs that very command of *increase and multiply*, even according to the flesh; and the more of sensual pleasure, the less of happiness; for the powers of the understanding fall thereby into a state of disorder, and all the inclinations being ingrossed by the flesh, a man is driven to and fro by blasts of opposite desires, like a ship without a rudder, and becomes licentious and insatiate. Hence adulteries, fornications, murders, gluttonies, drunkenness, wrath, revenge, envy, jealousy, and the like passions, all hurtful to the bodies of men, all pernicious to society, and all contrary to God's design in the Creation;

tion; for God created man, that he should walk before him holy and unblameable in love, in order to live for ever; and not, like beasts, to live and die in his earthly nature: Therefore they who live in a total carelessness of the divine life, and pursue those things in which naturally men take too much delight, are called children of men; the others, children of God.

Pilgrim. And cannot these children of God, by cordial admonitions, by nervous reasonings, gain over and convert those profligates?

Noah. Convert others! they, alas! they themselves—

Pilgrim. Your concern, Father, interrupts your speech.

Noah. They themselves were perverted in course of time, especially when the old Patriarchs began to die off.

Pilgrim. Compose yourself, Father.

Noah. Oh! those worthies, those mighty ones, how are they fallen!

Pilgrim. I perceive, by your discourse, that there has been a sad degeneracy.

Noah. I have known many men shining patterns, fit, in all appearance, to be at the head of religious communities, withal men of parts and sagacity, and who could talk of the things of God like Angels; but, alas! they fell like meteors, or were washed away as dams by a flood.

Pilgrim. That is dreadful, indeed!

Noah. Observe yonder height, streight before you, as far as you can see.

Pilgrim. I observe it.

Noah. There stood once a farm-house, but long since destroyed by the Deluge, of which more presently. The owner of it was of our family, a man of irreproachable morals, and of considerable substance. We often used to have some edifying discourse together, particularly about the old way of living, and the wretched alterations

terations of manners. Then would he lament his coldness in doing good; yet, whenever he saw any person turning aside from the right way, he was sure not to let him want his good advice. He had also a good insight in natural sciences, and his intellects were much above the common, so that I was extremely taken with him. His wife, a very religious woman, dying some time after, he entered into a closer intimacy with me, and, for a long time, seemed to have no thoughts of a second marriage; but his mind altered. Hereupon I advised and conjured him not to marry into Cain's family, as was now become too usual. At first I had reason to hope that my advice would weigh with him; but he had cast his eye on a beautiful damsel, of wealthy parents, in the town of Hanoah, of which not a single stone is now to be seen. He began, by degrees, to decline my company; and when I intimated any thing of the indecency and danger of such a marriage, he would maintain, and not without some spleen, that it was very lawful, and a man might marry whom he pleased, if he himself did not depart from God. Behold the consequence! He now lies grovelling in the quagmire of the world.

Pilgrim. Why, Father, was it the marrying an alien, which drew on his ruin?

Noah. That you shall soon know. On his marrying her, he never more came near me. His Cainite wife soon introduced her evil customs and fashions into the house; a change of the childrens cloathing was one of her first steps. Now the house was frequently in an uproar with feasting, carousing, and riotous merriment; all the talk was about buying and selling, breeding of cattle, improving one's stock, and leaving good portions to children. Yet, instead of having sometimes a residue to distribute among the necessitous, his income fell short. Besides, the house must now be new-built; a kitchen was wanting; there an additional chamber or two, or such a piece of land, or something

else there was no doing without ; and thus new expences were incurred. In short, he who was once a bright luminary, who used to talk so sublimely of heavenly things, sunk into a love of the world, that it grieved me to the heart.

Pilgrim. But, with a good resolution, that marriage would not have drawn him into any snare.

Noah. Believe me, Son, he who cannot repress his inclinations whilst the Spirit is still strong in him, and the allurements small ; much less will he be able when he has suppressed, or even grieved the Spirit, and the allurements have gathered strength. Therefore, the Divine Spirit frequently recommends, as we tender our safety, a strict watchfulness over ourselves, and the avoidance of the first appearances of evil.

Pilgrim. To be sure, the loss of such a friend, and in such a manner, was a melancholy circumstance.

Noah. Would to God it had stopped there !

Pilgrim. Why, then, it seems matters went from bad to worse.

Noah. To worse, indeed : For his children being grown up, they also must marry as their fancies led them ; and he having been a man of note, his example came more and more into vogue, every one thinking, if he did so, well may I. And thus, in time, the falling off among the children of God became general ; and
 Gen. vi. the first cause of it was their being taken with the beauty of the daughters of the children of men.

Pilgrim. Had the children of God, then, no handsome virtuous women among them ?

Noah. Naturally they were not inferior to the other, but did not deck themselves out with ornaments of gold and shewy apparel. They minded only the ornament of a quiet, meek spirit ; and thus did not trouble themselves about outward finery, like the daughters of Cain, who were continually practising one new device or other, to allure the eyes of men, and thus infatuate

uate them. Whence it followed, that the virtuous damsels, seeing themselves slighted by their young men, began to give into the fashions of the world, and affect dress and shew; and this vanity, like a flood, broke in among the godly.

Pilgrim. A sad flood! I wonder how you held out against it.

Noah. As for myself, I do not know that I ever altered in the least, either outwardly or inwardly, but kept close to devotion, exercising myself continually in divine things, laying to heart God's righteousness, that he punishes evil and rewards good; and these things I preached and spoke of to others. The example of our pious forefathers was frequently in my thoughts. I was greatly assisted by the worthy Jared, Enoch's father, who used, with much pleasure, to tell me of his son's virtues. He was a powerful support to me. My heart perfectly bounds with joy at the remembrance of his instructive conversation; but I lost him Gen. v. 20. when I was but three hundred and sixty six years old, after he had lived nine hundred and sixty two years. From that time the world began to grow more impious; and, really, so many were daily falling off around me, that I began to apprehend, at last, I should be left by myself. As to marriage, it was with great difficulty I could bring myself to think of it, lest my children also might be seduced; so that I was about five hundred years old when ver. 32. my first child was born.

Pilgrim. So, I perceive, you have passed thro' miserable times.

Noah. I have only given you one instance, of many thousands, that you might be let into the cause and manner of the degeneracy. To relate to you every occurrence would be impossible, as it would be unnecessary to burden your ears with such tales; yet you must know, that the prevalence of these improper marriages, and of other crimes, was productive of much greater

evil than any yet mentioned, so that I shudder at the thoughts of it.

Pilgrim. You will not hide such an important particular from me.

Noah. No ; if grief will permit me.

Pilgrim. To be sure, it can be no pleasure to relate calamities ; yet such a piece of history I would not be ignorant of, and you may be as long, or as short, as you please.

Noah. Mankind having thus set at naught the sweet intimations of God's gracious Spirit, the Spirit, together with its light, withdrew from the heart of man. Now followed a most horrible increase of wickedness and impiety ; not only marriages contrary to God's express command, but flagrant libidinousness, rapine, outrages, and murders ; for, from the mixture of the children of God with the daughters of men, were born men of large bodies, strong as giants, violent, crafty, and cruel, that the whole world became corrupt in their ways to a most monstrous excess : The very beasts seemed to have imbibed the wickedness of man.

Pilgrim. Here, Father, two questions offer themselves, which you will be so kind as to answer.

Noah. Well, let us hear them.

Pilgrim. The first is, why those born of such prohibited intermarriages were more fierce, large, ingenious, or wicked, than the former descendents of Cain ?

Noah. Why, formerly, the descendents of Cain had something of a regard for the children of God, would now and then attend their preachings, and retained a veneration for the names of Adam, Enoch, and others : Besides, they were then only a small part of the world, like those of Seth, that neither could achieve great matters, nor make their name a terror. But when they came to intermix, they blended their several opposite qualities ; the ferocity, voluptuousness, and cruelty of Cain's race, with the wisdom, temperance, and devotion,

tion, which distinguished the offspring of Seth; that the newly-born, though descended from both, were like neither. They exercised tyranny under the cover of holiness, were very dextrous in projects for amassing riches, reducing others into slavery, squeezing the poor, intelligent in building, planting, and improving land; they added house to house, and field to field; there was nothing but riding, hunting, driving about in carriages, sailing in pleasure-boats, feasting, carousings, debaucheries, and dissoluteness of all kinds, without the least fear or thought of the divine Majesty.

Pilgrim. The second question I would take the liberty of asking, is, how the beasts could be said to have imbibed the depravity of men?

Noah. It is thus, Son. Man was set over all things, to be a mild and discreet ruler, but soon began to take a delight in catching, hunting, killing, and, for mere diversion, tormenting some creatures; for this purpose making use of horses, dogs, and other beasts. Sometimes they would even set beasts fighting one against another, as lions against tigers, bears against wild boars, dogs against dogs, and even cocks against cocks; nay, the last was a mighty diversion among them. These ferocious usages of men introduced an enmity and rage among wild beasts; whilst the more harmless, as the deer, hare, and rabbit, fled from man, as a wanton destroyer, and not to be trusted.

Pilgrim. That must have been a sad sight, even in the eyes of God, who had created all things in loving-kindness, that they might be partakers of his bounty, and all live peaceably and quietly, according to their several natures.

Noah. Oh! Son, there is no saying with what concern he looked down on the children of men, like a father who sees his family running riot and alienated from him; yet, in his tender long suffering, instead of punishing their enormities, he allowed them time for

Gen. vi. 3. repentance, namely a hundred and twenty years, and I myself, by his command, made it known to them. I was then in my hundred and eightieth year. About twenty years after were born my three sons, Sem, Ham, and Japhet, of whose education I was the more careful, that they might not be carried away by the torrent of a general licentiousness.

Pilgrim. The kindness of God to wait so long for their conversion!

Noah. God's desire is, that a sinner should turn from the evil of his ways and live; when he strikes, it is in order to heal, and save transgressors from death.

Pilgrim. I suppose, Father, in this term for repentance, you was not silent.

Noah. I hope that my endeavours were answerable to my abilities; I intreated the unhappy race with tears; I threatened them with God's rod; I set before them the examples of the Patriarchs, and chiefly of Enoch, how he prophesied of the divine judgments; how Adam had foretold that the world was to be destroyed, and that he had therefore erected two pillars, such as should be proof against either fire or water, with the chief points of astronomy cut on them. I also displayed to them the turpitude and mischief of sin; that God seldom let it go quite unpunished in this life; and, on the other hand, the loveliness of virtue, how ravishingly sweet to walk in the love of God. I preached in the fields, in houses, in market places; all places were alike to me if there were but hearers. I remember, I was once preaching on a common, my aged father sitting on the ground, and abundance of people round me, one leaning on a staff, another on a pitch-fork, a third with a bag of carpenters tools; some again richly dressed, also not a few women with children in their arms, or at the breast; and I had the satisfaction to see many strongly moved by my discourse;

course; for duty to God, and an earnest concern for my fellow creatures, inspired every word.

Pilgrim. Your zeal, Father, I hope, produced some reformation.

Noah. Alas! no; they grew worse and worse.

Pilgrim. That is no less strange than sad! to hear so many sermons, and delivered with such earnestness and affection, yet without any amendment.

Noah. It is indeed strange, that men should be so obdurate, but when once they are so, outward preaching cannot convert them, unless they hear the divine voice within; but they necessarily grow worse and worse, like bad seed in the earth.

Pilgrim. That is but too true.

Noah. Some, who at first seemed to give some attention, began to be tired of preaching, saying, What he is now upon is a trite tale, that we knew long since; others said, Well, it is not all his prating shall hinder us from living as we list; others, were too much taken up with their trades, their lands and their wives, to hear of the things of God. Among others were sports and dancings, feasting, drinking, quarrelling, and fighting; no law or right, every one his own avenger, that the country was over-run with violences and abominations. Yes, my dear Son, were I to tell you of the roarings and hallowings of turbulent fellows along the streets, they would amaze you; my father generally kept the door shut, lest they might murder me; this hour there was a cry of murder, murder; the next our ears was dinned with singing and dancing, and all kinds of ribaldry.

Pilgrim. What a grief that must have been to the pious!

Noah. Among others, there was the good old man Methuselah, then little short of nine hundred years of age; he lived in a hut on an eminence, about a day's journey from us; I have often seen the tears run down his wrinkled cheeks at the sight of their profligate

sports, or when the discourse turned on the general forsaking of God. He was my father's father.

Pilgrim. If man, who, at best, has but a small spark of the Divinity, was so affected with the sight of this wickedness, how offensive must it have been to the Divine Being, which is all purity.

Noah. O Son, God seeing his children forsake him, and bent on their own ruin, it even repented him that he had made man; when I think on that, my heart is ever overwhelmed with grief. I cannot—

Pilgrim. All is past and gone now, Father; I beg you to go on with your relation?

Noah. When God saw his long suffering thus abused, and that men went on in their abandoned ways, it moved him, as I was saying, to such a degree, that he said, *It repenteth me that I made man.*

Pilgrim. Grievous, indeed, that God should complain of his work!

Noah. God did not so much complain of his work, which in itself was good, but of the incidents by which his work grew totally defiled and corrupted. He, therefore, determined, at once, to exterminate the human race with every thing having life; yet reserving one particular family for the restoration of the world, that his design in the Creation might not be frustrated.

Pilgrim. Oh the depths of God's wisdom! the riches of his goodness!

Noah. Such was his love for the future race of mankind, that he would not utterly cut them off; yet did his justice require, that they who had despised his mercy, and would not turn to him, should perish in their ingratitude.

Pilgrim. This displeasure of the Almighty, I suppose, was not unknown to man?

Noah. No, certainly; for besides my daily declaring it to them, the very influence and appearance of the Heavens shewed that the Creator was angry with the inhabitants of the earth; the sun frequently looking
very

very dim and black, and the moon red as blood; nor to mention earthquakes, tempests, contagions, dark and cloudy days, extraordinary heats, and barren seasons. Now were also seen dreadful comets, seeming to threaten the world with scourges; besides unusual sicknesses, frequent deaths, and other visitations; so that God was very far from leaving himself without a witness to the world, which, however, went on in voluptuousness and impiety, without the least regard to any impending vengeance.

Pilgrim. I should have thought all those calamitous tokens must have made some impression on them?

Noah. There were, in every place, some who set up to see farther than their neighbours, and all these things, they said, came merely from the course of Nature: the saddened aspects of the sun and moon were owing to a dense hazy air; earthquakes, to winds pent up in the earth; the comets, to light inflammative substances, kindled in the vast expanse of the æther: the tempests, storms, barren seasons, droughts, contagions, and every other evil, they attributed to some natural cause or other; and as for God, they said, he did not trouble himself about mankind, but having once created them, left them to shift for themselves. The effect of which was, that every natural circumstance, favourable to mankind, was looked on only as a thing of course.

Pilgrim. Such thoughtlessness!

Noah. At length, God ordered me to make an ark, in the manner of a ship, the length three hundred cubits; the breadth fifty, and the height thirty, with a door in the middle, and a window at the top; “for, said he, I will bring a flood of waters upon the earth which shall destroy every thing having life, but you will I preserve, with your wife, your sons and your sons wives; likewise all beasts and animals; these you are to take with you into the ark, of the birds
and

Gen. vi. 14.

and clean creatures seven couple, but of the unclean only one couple.

Pilgrim. Here, again, I must admire the wisdom and goodness of God, in saving so many more of the clean than of the unclean. But was not you apprehensive, that your ark would be too small for such a multitude of creatures, especially as food was also to be laid in for them?

Noah. I fell to building, without any computations, confident that God, who had prescribed the dimensions, and set me to work, knew what he was about.

Pilgrim. And could you alone, Father, build this ark?

Noah. I and my family did the greater part; for besides my sons, I had several servants, and sometimes I hired artificers. First, I caused the timber to be barked and felled in the forests, then had it drawn by men up a small eminence, on which I intended to build the ark; after shaping it a little, it was sawn into planks and boards, and planed, getting every thing so prepared that my own people might be able the more easily to go through with the work.

Pilgrim. Pray what said your neighbours, when they saw you thus busied?

Noah. At first, they could not imagine what I had in my head; some said, it must certainly be for a large house; others surmised, that I intended nothing less than a new town for my family; others again thought, that stables was all I had in view; some guessed one thing, some another; for I kept the whole a secret, till matters were in such forwardness, that I could do without any help, should I be put to it; and this really proved the case; for on acquainting them with my view, one took up his axe, and went away; another, clapping his saw under his arm, followed; a third, getting together his adze, line, plane, and hammer, threw them into a bag, and turned his back on me.

Pilgrim,

Pilgrim. Strange, indeed, that they would not help you in what seemed for their preservation.

Noah. They believed nothing of the matter; then they were afraid, that should any one, in the belief of it, spread such a report, their trade might suffer greatly; for building was then a very profitable business, and a great deal of it was going forward, partly by reason of the increase of inhabitants, and not a little for pleasure and ostentation, so that workmen could scarce be had. Had my proposal gained credit, it would, at once, have put a stop to all buildings.

Pilgrim. Well, Father, and could your family alone finish the ark?

Noah. Very easily; for besides that the heaviest part of the work was now done, we had many years to finish it in; it being God's pleasure to have me employ a great number of years, that the building of it might, as with words, warn the world to turn from its wickedness.

Pilgrim. And when they saw it in some forwardness, had that no effect on them?

Noah. Some made a jest of it, saying, What is the old fellow about? Others, Now he has other new whims in his pate; the world is to be destroyed, and he, forsooth, the only one to be saved. A fine story, truly! No, no; the world is of too strong a built; the sun, moon, and stars remain as they were, so let us marry, build, plant, and trade, as did our forefathers; what he is canting of, is mere foolery, not worth listening to.

Pilgrim. How! did none side with you?

Noah. Some aged persons, as, among others, Methusalah and my father Lamech, confirmed my declarations, but no heed was given to them, as in their dotage.

Pilgrim. How sensuality blinds the mind!

Noah. That I too much found in those times; for all my intreaties and admonitions, my pointing to the ark, and saying, See, the time draws near when God will

will destroy the world by water, and that is the reason of my building this ark; amend and you will be preserved, otherwise you will perish, and repent it too late; all was of no avail; indeed, merely to spight me, many grew more audacious in their profligacy.

Pilgrim. But what, at length, was the issue?

Noah. Every year they saw the ark considerably forwarded, and every year I saw the world altering for the worse, in drinking and incredible debaucheries, in usury, in fraud, and cheating: For they who before seemed to have some thought, now observed no measure; scarce was any one to be found with the least relish of divine things; *every imagination of their hearts was continually evil.*

Pilgrim. Astonishing obstinacy, indeed!

Noah. However, I hoped that a change would be brought about in one or another, and sometimes I instantly conjured them; but ridicule, a cold look, and often an open insult, were the returns I met with. If I was any thing long in my discourse, many would fall asleep, and some of the more abandoned would revile me, and threaten my life.

Pilgrim. The expectation of such a dreadful destruction must have lain very heavy on your heart, as you had many relations and acquaintances in the world, and the time was now drawing near.

Noah. Oh! Son, there is no expressing the anguish of my heart, at the thoughts that all mankind were soon to be swallowed up in destruction.

Pilgrim. Some, however, I suppose, died a natural death.

Noah. Yes, yes, by sickness, or age, as usual; and among others, five years before the flood came on, I lost my father Lamech, in his seven hundred and
Gen.v. 31. seventieth year. Soon after, I put the finishing hand to the ark; and, really, it was not without much emotion that I beheld it completed.

Pilgrim,

Pilgrim. Well ; and this, I will hope, brought men into a better way of thinking.

Noah. Would it had ! But never was so much building, planting, marrying, buying, selling, injuries, frolicking, and murdering, as in the year before the flood. To imagine that the world was to be destroyed, seemed the height of filliness and folly.

Pilgrim. It is as if God would also try your faith.

Noah. As I knew it to be God's way to act contrary to appearances, I was the less discouraged.

Pilgrim. Yet was it very remarkable.

Noah. Very right ; but what I am going to tell you, is worth hearing. There was, in my neighbourhood, a very rich man ; the ruins of his house are still plainly to be seen. In this very year his four sons and three daughters were married, and all with the utmost splendor ; feasting, and dancing, and revelling, as if they were to live for ever. The old man came over to my lodge, and told me, that he intended to build such a house for his eldest son, such an one for his second, and so on proportionably ; then to such a house would he annex such a piece of land, to such a house that meadow and that field, and to such a house that garden ground, that pasture, those cows and sheep, and, at his death, they should have much more : For, added he, children, and children's children, must be taken care of. I answered thus : " My dear Friend, it grieves me, that you are yet so slow of understanding. Know you not, that the world is to be destroyed, perhaps this very year ? Then, what becomes of your scheming ? Would it not be better to apply ourselves to know God, than to cark and care so much about the world ? " But all I could say signified nothing. Poh ! God do any such thing ! No, no ; he made the world for us to make the most of. I replied, " You have false notions of God's mercy. It would draw our affections from this world, that we may enjoy a better ; it would deliver us from a wretched thralldom to the lusts of the flesh, which, at length,

length, must perish." This was all thrown away on him. Away he went, agreed with workmen of several kinds, the foundations were laid, the several divisions were marked, scaffoldings raised, and, in some houses, carried up almost a man's height, he himself running about bare-headed, and inspecting every thing, when the Deluge came on.

Pilgrim. If age was so void of consideration, what could be expected from youth.

Noah. True, indeed. But to proceed: In this same year died the venerable Methuselah, the son of Enoch, aged nine hundred and sixty-nine years.

Pilgrim. A prodigious age! Yet, long as his life was, God seemed to remove him, to save him the affliction of the Deluge. But I feel something of an impatience to know the event.

Noah. At the place where I dwelt there was a great holiday, with a vast resort of people from all parts. The markets were thronged with stands of all kinds of wares, and the inns crowded with guests, who poured down wine as if it had been water. There was singing and dancing, fighting and wrestling, bowling, and every diversion, till night. Then, instead of thinking on God, they renewed their carousings, drolling on the divine menaces: This ark-builder now may break up his overgrown chest, and turn timber-merchant. Here's a fine night! The world be destroyed! An old dreamer! Soon after, I heard an uproar at my door; Come out, you shipwright; we'll quickly make an end of your world! You hypocritical villain, to pretend to make a parcel of timorous mopes of us with your prophecies! I, in the mean time, lay prostrate, fervently supplicating, that God, in his mercy, would not impute these sins to them; and all my family continued with me the whole night in prayer. The next day, being the tenth day of the second month, in the six hundredth year

year of my age, the Lord said unto me, Gen.vii.1,&c.
 "The end of all flesh is come up before me: Go into the ark, thou, and thy wife, and thy sons, with their wives, likewise all creatures, as I directed; for yet seven days, and I will cause it to rain upon the earth so as to destroy every living thing on the earth." I bowed, and prepared to execute his orders.

Pilgrim. What happened then?

Noah. I immediately dispatched my sons to get the ark in readiness, to make any necessary repairs where the heat had split the boards, or the bitumen had run off. Then they built up the cabins, and the stalls and stables for the creatures, that each might stand in its order, the large by themselves, and the small also separately; also those between whose nature there was the greatest agreement. The fowls were in the uppermost story, and the reptiles in the lowest; we ourselves lived in a part of the middle story. Afterwards they laid in all kinds of necessaries for ourselves and the animals.

Pilgrim. There must have been work enough, before every thing was settled.

Noah. You are right, my Son. Besides, troubled for the destruction of mankind, I once more went, and with tears entreated them earnestly to repent, declaring God's late order to me. I was urgent with those with whom I had lived in any degree of friendship; but all scoffed at me.

Pilgrim. Obduracy almost incredible! But, pray, how did you get the beasts in?

Noah. In that, my Son, we had no trouble; they were directed by God; and, indeed, very wonderful was it to behold: For no sooner were all things provided, than up came a lion and lionsess, and followed us, as tame as lambs, to their place. In like order came the elephant, with its female, the rhinoceros, the camel, the panther, the leopard, the tiger, the dromedary, the wolf, the lynx, the tragelaphon, the tarandus,

tarandus, the horse, the ass, the badger, the swine, the camel-leopard, the hyena, the crocodile, the mantichora, the bucerota, the axis, each with his mate. These were followed by beasts of a lesser magnitude, as foxes, dogs, cats, monkeys, hares, rabbits, squirrels, ferrets, weasels, hedgehogs, polecats, rats, mice, moles, and lizards; likewise locusts and ants, with all kinds of reptiles and worms, of each one couple; but of clean creatures, as kine, sheep, goats, chamois, buffaloes, deer, elks, and the like, of each seven couples: And all were arranged in their several receptacles.

Pilgrim. This is quite wonderful; and especially that those beasts, some being of such a fierce, ravenous nature, could live so quietly together?

Noah. God had tamed their natures as at first in Paradise, so that there was not the least disturbance, not even amongst the venomous animals; yet we had, besides others, serpents, snakes, adders, scorpions, and some extremely hideous; and other creatures, which, though they get the greatest part of their food in the water, cannot live in it for a constancy, as the crocodile, the hippopotamus, the beaver, the otter, and the other amphibious creatures. The spider had long before spread its net in the ark, to catch flies for its aliment; but its innate hatred of the snake did not shew itself here. The same of other creatures, which naturally live at mortal enmity. The wolf did not snarl at the sheep, the rhinoceros offered not to assault the elephant, nor the ichneumon to eat into the crocodile's belly; but, by the universal peaceableness, it was as if they knew themselves to be in a place of shelter from danger.

Pilgrim. The wonders of God's œconomy! It must have been something very entertaining to see all the beasts enter the ark in such order, and especially the birds, of which, however, you have yet made no mention.

Noah. True, Son, for it was the very last day before they came, and they flew in at the top, except such
whose

whose bodies are too heavy for their wings, as the ostrich, the cock, with his hens, the goose, duck, partridge, and the like ; but the flying hosts came rushing in at the window like a storm, yet in such order that they were all easily distinguishable.

Pilgrim. A fine sight, yet very melancholy on such an occasion.

Noah. There was the beautiful bird of Paradise, the turkey-cock and hen, the splendid peacock, the argentine swan, the soaring eagle, the green parrot, the crooked bill falcon, the keen-eyed hawk, the sweet-smelling cinnamon bird, the purple bird, the long-necked heron, the variegated pheasant, the pretty and sweet-singing canary-bird, gold-finches, chaffinches, green-finches, robin-red-breasts, larks, thrushes, blackbirds, swallows, and the canorous nightingale ; thither flocked also the well paired turtles, and all kinds of pigeons, the season-knowing stork, the vigilant crane, the fond pelican, the cormorant, the ibis, the arb, the seleucides, the zelan, the hargol, and the hagab ; the kite, the falcon, the cuckow, the peewit, the magpie, the sparrow, the wren, the wagtail, the crow, daw, raven, owl, quail, and many others, even to the bat and the little bee, and flies innumerable. Lastly came the sea-mews, with their doleful cry and glossy wings, giving notice of the dreadful tempest, which soon was to discharge itself on the earth.

Pilgrim. What a multitude of creatures ! They must have been a long time going in.

Noah. It was all done on the last day, every thing, as I said, having been prepared before hand : And on the seventh day, namely the seventeenth of the second month, we, that is, my sons and their wives, by God's command went into the ark, and immediately were followed by the beasts, after which came the birds, and all regularly betook themselves to the places appointed for them.

Gen. vi. 7.
11. 13.

Pilgrim. And had the ark convenient room for all?

Noah. Yes, and for more. I told you that the length of it was three hundred cubits, the breadth fifty, and the height thirty. When the larger beasts had laid themselves down in their stalls, the small ones took up but little room; and for the birds, though of most there were seven pair, half the upper story sufficed; many had crept under the covering, as the owl and bat; others roosted on sticks, close to one another. Had a hundred persons turned from their sins, we could have entertained them, and very glad should we have been of such guests; but even the sight of the creatures hastening into the ark did not induce one to follow their example.

Pilgrim. I am strangely anxious to hear the issue.

Noah. On the day that we went into the ark the weather was very serene and fair, the corn was ripe, the trees clad in cheerful verdure, the carpenters and bricklayers hard at work, the smiths plying the anvil; some houses were begun, some raised a story or two, some near completed; in the fields the reapers were cutting and binding up the corn; in some places were weddings: One called to another, "Here's delightful weather! I never knew such a plentiful year. What a dream that is, of the world being to be destroyed!" Now whilst all were thus in their elements, building, planting, tilling, marrying, singing, dancing, without the least apprehension of any thing amiss, and we were got into the ark, sufficiently ridiculed by all who saw it, and the Lord had shut the door of the ark, the heavens were suddenly overspread with clouds, whence issued such terrible thunders, and lightnings,

Gen.vii.11.

and rains, as the like had never been seen. Now all ran for shelter, thinking it would soon be over. Night came on, and it was still the same; nothing but storm and tempest, gloom and pouring down of rain. The next day the vallies were full of water, that some were for drawing up their cattle; but to no purpose;
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the rain not only continuing as violent as ever, but springs under the earth gushed forth in such overwhelming torrents, that it ran down the hills like the roaring of the sea, inundating all the low lands, that the beasts began to swim, and gain the heights; the corn floated; the new timber-works fell to pieces; there was an end of weddings and entertainments. Every one began to think of his wife, children and furniture; but on coming to his home, there was the water rushing in. They wildly stared about, East, West, North, and South, to see if any cloud was breaking; but not a single glimpse of hope; the rain seemed rather to increase, and poured down night and day without intermission. Next day they began to fly away with bed and bedding, imagining they could escape the water; which they might, had it been only a short irruption; but now there was no such thing. Some clambered up to the roofs, others swarmed up trees, and they who lived on the hills sought the highest peaks; and these only prolonged their doom a few miserable days.

Pilgrim. But now, Father, were they not convinced that all this was owing to their sins?

Noah. Oh! Son, had you heard the lamentations, seen the confusion, agonies and uproar, when the roofs began to fall in, and the tops of the trees to bend, mothers embracing their children, husbands their wives, friends and neighbours each other; some wringing their hands; some calling on God; others, who saw the ark begun to drive, stretching out their arms for help, but now too late, the term of grace was elapsed.

Pilgrim. What a dismal sight! had God shewn them mercy, perhaps they might have repented.

Noah. Forced repentance, Son, is seldom either lasting or sincere; they had slighted God in the days of ease and plenty.

Pilgrim. Little knows he, who slights God, what he slights.

Noah. Very true: Some days after, the tops of the mountains began to be covered; roofs of houses, furniture, limbs of trees with people on them, cradles with children, mothers with infants at their breasts; some locked in each others embraces, some sitting on horses and other beasts, driving too and fro, also birds whose wings had failed them, with an infinite variety of other creatures; the summits of some mountains the waters had not yet reached, and these were crowded with men and beasts, whose mingled yellings much affected us; one saw his father raving; another his mother, sister and brother; a third his children; a fourth knew not what was become of his parents or relations; and the worst of all was that they had nothing but death before their eyes, for the heavens poured down as impetuously as ever. They ran from height to height, still there was no way to escape, every where the water was at their heels.

Pilgrim. Such were the fruits of their ridiculing and insulting you, and abusing the divine lenity.

Noah. Now they saw the fatal mistake of the supposed wise men, in accounting for all things from nature, as if God had no hand in the antecedent tokens: Where now was their ostentation and voluptuousness; their building, their buying and selling, their graizery and improvements; all swept away; the great were now reduced to a level with the meanest, and tyrants saw themselves involved in the same fate as their slaves: In a word, all flesh now saw their folly. It was not many days before the highest mountains also were under water, that every thing which had sought refuge there, man, beast, bird, and reptile, perished, we in the ark alone excepted: For it had rained forty days and
 Gen. vii. 20. forty nights, that the waters prevailed fifteen cubits above the highest mountains, and neither man, beast, nor bird remained alive.

Pilgrim. Woeful catastrophe! deplorable consequences of sin!

Noah

Noah. Hence learn, Son, that God is both merciful and just; merciful to those who turn to him, and just in punishing the impenitent.

Pilgrim. May it be a lesson to after ages! But what became of you?

Noah. The forty days rain being over, the air cleared up into calm, fair weather, the sun broke out, the stars appeared, but all around us was water, except a small black speck, namely the ark; and in that was shut up every remaining creature which had life. A hundred and fifty days did it continue driving to and fro, without grounding any where. Some of the time I spent in praying, and teaching my family the knowledge of the things of God: And they carefully tended the animals, which here had divested themselves of their natural fierceness, and were tractable as lambs. The temperature in the ark was quite mild; for though the sun was in the summer signs, the cool of the water abated its heat, and the water, which, by the winds naturally arising from it, would have made it extremely cold, was attempered by the heat of the sun. Afterwards, when the sun had risen and set a hundred and fifty times without ever casting a shade, no house, tree, nor hill appearing to intercept its rays, and it was now entering into *Libra*, making day and night of an equal length, we felt the ark give a shock and remained fixed; which rejoiced us not a little, as a sign that the waters were fallen. We soon saw the hill, on which the ark had grounded, to enlarge, and the waters daily subsiding. On this we praised God, who had been mindful of us; for we longed extremely to see the earth dry. On the first day of the tenth month, the sun being in *Sagittarius*, the tops of several mountains were seen projecting; a proof that Ararat, the mountain on which the ark rested, was the highest in that country, now called Armenia, which is confirmed by the fragments still remaining.

Gen.viii.5.

ver. 4.

Pilgrim. Did not the birds or beasts shew some joy, or alteration?

Noah. Whilst the sun was lowring, they seemed melancholy and drooping; but on its return upwards, and when it drew near to the sign of *Aquarius*, some creatures began to make themselves be heard: The little birds, and particularly the lark, made the ark ring with melody. The raven, as if it had got scent of some carcase, fell a croaking, and flying against the window: By this I conceived that the waters might be totally gone off, and opened the window. On the tenth day

of the month *Sebath*, the sun being in *Pisces*,
ver. 7. I sent forth a raven, which kept flying to and fro from peak to peak, shewing that the waters were still on the earth, yet never returned into the ark.

Pilgrim. But, Father, could not you yourself see from the window whether the waters were fallen, or not?

Noah. The mountain, on which the ark had settled, was of such a height, that all below having a blueish cast, we could not know whether it was air or water; so, to be certain, I let fly a dove, which soon
ver. 8, 9. returned.

Pilgrim. How came the dove to return, and not the raven?

Noah. The raven had met with plenty of carcases, which it preferred to being shut up in the ark: Then the dove, not to mention its natural timidity, besides missing its food, was not so strong-winged as to fly

from peak to peak. Seven days after, I sent
ver. 10, 11. forth another dove, which, to my great joy, returned with a sprig of olive in its bill, as a certain token that the waters were abated below

the tops of the trees. This was on the twenty
ver. 12. fifth day of the month *Sebath*: At the expiration of seven days more, I let fly a third dove, which never returned.

Pilgrim. Now you was certain of the earth's being quite dry.

Noah.

Noah. It was, indeed, a very promising sign. I would not, however, take on me to open the ark, or go out without an express order from him who had bid me go into it; for, though thoroughly sensible that the waters were gone off, yet would I not depend on my own knowledge, or follow my own inclination.

Pilgrim. How long, then, did you remain in the ark, after letting fly the third dove?

Noah. Near two months; for it pleased God to put the earth into our hands, not only dry, but verdant, flowery, and fertile, and cleared of the smell of dead bodies of men and beasts, which, (a very affecting sight, indeed!) lay scattered about. I had, indeed, for the refreshment of the animals, broke up the cover of the ark, without one of them making any motion to go out; till on the twenty-seventh day of the second month, the sun being in *Taurus*, God directed me to go out, with my wife, my
ver. 14—17.
three sons and their wives, and all the several kinds of beasts, birds, and insects.

Pilgrim. They shewed great joy, I suppose, at their release.

Noah. It is inexpressible by what pretty gesticulations they expressed their gladness, and how orderly they put themselves in readiness to go out, after we had laid a bridge for them.

Pilgrim. Then they did not crowd out confusedly?

Noah. After my family, with our little furniture, had landed out of the ark, on Mount Ararat, immediately followed all the creatures by pairs, as they had gone in, running, skipping, and rolling in the grass, which now they had not trod for a whole year and ten days; and after I had selected some, both of the clean beasts and birds, for a burnt-offering, they all dispersed whither their natures prompted them. The granivorous sought herbage, the carnivorous fell on the carcases of men and beasts, the aquatile hastened to the lowlands, and peopled the marshes, and the web-footed made their

way to the streams. The lesser birds lodged themselves in the trees, making all places ring with their sprightly notes: The very cuckow and owl uttered their joy. Some departed to particular regions, as the bird of Paradise to an island in India; the parrot, turkey, cinnamon-bird, the ibis, crows, kings-fishers, and wrens, also the crane and stork, to various quarters.

Pilgrim. So each betook itself to the place, or climate, which best agreed with it.

Noah. Very right; therefore it was that God created such a vast variety of beasts and birds, that none of the several parts of the world, cold, hot, temperate, high, low, wildernesses, fields, heaths, rivers, lakes, and the very air, might not want inhabitants: For he is a God of life, and has adapted dwellings to the nature of all living creatures.

Pilgrim. Father, I have two things to ask, though you can only answer one at a time.

Noah. And what are they, Son?

Pilgrim. The first is, in what condition you found the world? And the second, what was your first business?

Noah. The first will be best answered last; and as to the second, no sooner were we out of the ark, before we
ver. 20. went down from the mountain; I built an altar to offer a sacrifice of thanksgiving for our preservation, my family joining with me in humble supplications, that God would be appeased, and no more destroy the earth for its sins; and the Lord smelling a sweet savour, determined in his clemency to man, as being from his infancy inclined to evil, and easily seducible by the inticements of the flesh, that he would never more destroy the world in the manner he had done; but that, whilst the earth remaineth, feed-time and harvest, and cold and heat, and summer and winter, and day and night, should not cease?

Pilgrim. How is that, Father? Has God a smell?

Noah,

Noah. God, being an amiable and pure essence, every thing amiable and pure is singularly agreeable to him, not from any outward ceremony or offering, but the heart; and by nothing is God won more than by an upright, pure, devout, and grateful heart, which to him is as the odour of the most exquisite spices; for the end of all his will is, that we love him above all things, as was seen in Abel, the integrity of whose heart made both him and his sacrifice acceptable; whereas, on account of the depravity of Cain's heart, both he and his sacrifice were rejected.

Pilgrim. I thank you for your explanation.

Noah. Afterwards God blessed us, and gave us rule over all creatures on earth, not only to master them for our service, but to Gen. ix. 1, 2, 3. make their flesh part of our food, which till now had not been permitted.

Pilgrim. May I ask why God permitted it more now than before?

Noah. The beasts had transgressed the end of their creation; and had torn and devoured the flesh of man, their natural sovereign; so that it now pleased God to allow him to kill for food all kinds of beasts, that he might be lord over all flesh; for God hath formed him after his likeness; therefore, the shedding of man's blood will he never let go unpunished; even of man himself, shedding human blood, shall his blood be also shed by man: But as this law cannot be observed with regard to wild beasts, the effusion of human blood is avenged on the whole race of animals, yet with this exception, that their flesh is not to be eaten whilst the blood is in it.

Pilgrim. Wherefore, Father?

Noah. God, as the author of life, wills not that man should destroy beasts in a murderous, sanguinary way, but with thankfulness offer to him that in which life consists, namely the blood, and then, with decency and moderation, use the flesh for food.

Pilgrim.

Pilgrim. I am wonderfully delighted with your narrative and reflections.

Noah. Afterwards God condescended to ver. 8, &c. make a covenant with me, that there shall never more be a flood to destroy the earth; and confirmed it by the token of the rainbow appearing in the clouds.

Pilgrim. Well, I had imagined the rainbow to be produced by the sun-beams, and not by any particular working of God, as a supernatural sign.

Noah. It is, indeed, produced by the appearance of the sun opposite to a rainy sky; but the sun, of itself, could not give it such perfection; as we see a strip of blue, signifying that the earth was once destroyed by water; a strip of green, signifying that it shall continue in its fertility; and a strip of red, denoting that it shall be brought to an end by fire: For, without God's interposition, how should the colours separate so from each other, and not rather intermix, as we see in a drop of water when the sun beams on it.

Pilgrim. Yet we sometimes see, that not only the sun, but the moon also, forms circles of different colours round it.

Noah. I own it to be also a natural effect, having seen such circles before the flood, but never so large, clear, and lively, as since the forty days rain; which evinces, that as God, by the natural rain, worked in an extraordinary manner to effect the Deluge, he also works in an extraordinary manner on the course of nature in this rainbow, which generally appears in rainy weather, as a token that the earth shall no more be destroyed by water.

Pilgrim. Thus God, it seems, by the common natural causes, performs extraordinary works; which, though they appear but common effects, have a particular signification.

Noah. Certainly.

Pilgrim.

Pilgrim. Now remains the second question : In what condition did you find the earth at your coming out of the ark ?

Noah. As we came down the mountain we met with multitudes of carcases, both of men and beasts, which had fled to the heights. The trees were loaded with moss and weeds. The fields were strewed with shells. In some mires lay broken trees covered with mud ; that after-ages will wonder how trees came to lie so deep in the ground, and how sea-shells, and even the skeletons of monstrous fishes, should be found on mountains. The course of rivers was also diverted ; for the stream, which once issued out of Paradise, was no more to be found. Now the Nile had its source in Ethiopia, the Euphrates in Armenia, the Hiddekel in Mesopotamia, the Gihon, or Ganges, in Assyria. As for towns and large edifices, it was dismal to see them lying all in ruins. In short, the whole appearance of the world was totally changed. A most desolate, afflicting spectacle, indeed !

Pilgrim. It is but three hundred and forty eight years since that memorable destruction ; yet, behold ! here's the earth swarming with people, and cultivated and planted ; every place has a chearful aspect ; that I wonder things have so soon been set on so good a footing.

Noah. Why, after looking about us a while, the first business we took in hand was tillage ; and I planted the vine. My son Sem particularly applied himself to build huts, and, two years after, had a son named Arphaxad, now in the three hundred and forty sixth year of his age, and who has had several children ; of his lineage is Abraham. Besides Arphaxad, Sem had four other sons, Elam, Assur, Lud, and Aram ; whose descendents became very numerous. To Japhet also were born seven sons, Gomer, Magog, Madai, Javan, Tubal, Mesech, and Tiras,

ver. 20.

Gen. x. 22.

ver. 2.

who

who likewise had many children. Cham, my third son, was the father of four sons, Chus, Misraim, Phut, and

ver. 6. Canaan: But the last was profligate and insolent; for, happening to see me uncovered, he made a mock of me, though his grandfather; whereas my two sons, Sem and Gen. ix. 21, &c.

Japhet, turning aside their faces, carefully covered me: For which act of decency and respect I blessed them, at the same time cursing Canaan. The children of Cham, however, multiplied into many families, grew wealthy, and carried it with a high hand.

Pilgrim. So wickedness was not totally extirpated by the flood.

Noah. Oh! Son, it soon grew to a great head.

Pilgrim. Prodigious!

Noah. I'll tell you, Son. At the birth of Peleg, a third grandson of Sem's, which was a hundred and four years after the deluge, (though he died about ten years ago, in his two hundred and fortieth year) the world came to be divided, and the occasion of it was this:

Gen. xi. 2, 3. Soon after the flood, my children moved eastward into the land of Shinar; and some, affecting to leave behind them a great name, and others, as it were, to bid defiance to the Almighty and secure themselves against another deluge, set about building a city, and in it a tower of an immense height, that the top should reach to the very sky.

Pilgrim. I think your children should have been wiser, than thus to set themselves against the Almighty, whose hand they had so lately felt; then what astronomy they were masters of, might have taught them, that the building of such a tower was impossible, by reason of the vast distance between the earth and the heavens.

Noah. As to my Sons, Sem and Japhet, they were sensible that it was a mad undertaking and would have no hand in it: But Nimrod, issued from Cham,

as son to Chus, a mighty one, and of a fierce disposition, which he had contracted by being ever hunting and catching wild beasts, Gen. x. 8, 9, 10. getting together a crew of desperadoes, began to set up for himself and lord it over others; and having by the assistance of Assur, a son of Sem, increased his numbers, he reduced all the neighbouring people; and, what with force and promises, brought them into his design of building the abovementioned city and tower.

Pilgrim. Presumptuous ambition!

Noah. Instantly a great number of brick-kilns were got ready, mortar and lime prepared, trees felled, carpenters hired, with labourers innumerable: Day and night were employed in carpentry, joiners work, brick-laying and scaffolding, in a short time carrying the tower to such a height, that it made one dizzy to look down, and its circuit on the ground was really astonishing; but this temerity gave offence to God: And having promised never to destroy the earth by a second deluge, though they had well deserved it, he made use of another method for putting a stop to the work, and dispersing them in the midst of their most sanguine expectations.

Pilgrim. What method, I pray?

Noah. As they had all one, and the same language, God varied it so, that Gen. xi. 6, 7, 8. they all fell into confusion, not understanding each other; one calling for wood, another brings him stone; and to him who calls for stone, mortar was brought; hoist up cries one, and the other lowers; so that, in short, they were near going together by the ears, every one thinking that they played upon him. This disappointment admitting of no remedy, they gave over their boasted structure, and not only so, but they were obliged to separate: Japhet's descendents journeyed westward, namely Gomer, went into Galatia, Thuiscan into Germany, Tubal into Iberia, Mesech into Cappadocia; Tharsis built the city still called by his name; Magog possessed himself of Scythia, and his descendents

descendents seated themselves in all the western islands : As for Cham's offspring they mostly bent their march southward, as far as the country of the Moors ; Misraim into Egypt ; Canaan called the land where he settled by his name : And his sons were Sidon, Heth, Gergeci, Jebusi, Amori, whose descendents also bear their name. The famous city of Sidon was built by the first ;

ver. 9. but Sem's children remained with their father in the East. Assur continued with the

haughty Nimrod, and completed the building of the city, which, on account of the above confusion, was named Babel ; and here they founded the first monarchy, which, from Assur, was called the Assyrian. Sem's other descendents, as Seba, Ophir, Hevila, peopled the Indian lands, whither Peleg accompanied his father Eber, who is there with his father Selah, who had for his father Arphaxad the son of Sem. All these continued to dwell in Canaan, and the adjacent countries. The only one of them dead is Peleg, and he but lately ; all the others are still living, and do very well.

Pilgrim. These are, indeed, wonderful things, Father, which you have related to me, and a remarkable instance, not only of man's depravity, but of the divine wisdom, which takes the artful in their own craft, and this by a punishment of the greatest advantage to the world ; for, by this dispersion, the earth, depopulated by the flood, became every where replenished.

Noah. A very good remark, Son.

Pilgrim. Pray, how did matters go with the recent Assyrian monarchy ; for by what I hear, a new King, named Samhisninas, has been lately set up there.

Noah. It is so Son, but I fear he will introduce a very pernicious custom, and that under a specious appearance.

Pilgrim. How so, Father !

Noah. Alas ! that the world is so easily imposed on.

Pilgrim. A more explicate account of this, if you please, that I may understand the matter.

Noah.

Noah. I must first acquaint you with the rise and aggrandisements of that monarchy. Nimrod, the hunter, after a reign of fifty-four years, left the kingdom to Jupiter Belus, who reigned twenty-six years in a continued peace, enacted many good laws for the maintenance of order and tranquillity, and was eminently skilful in astronomy, having studied the famous pillars, on which the principles of that science had been cut in the Antediluvian times; and he enlarged and decorated the city of Babel. Such an administration had endeared him to his subjects, that his death was universally lamented. In his time were born Serug, the son of Reu, and likewise Nahor, the son of Serug, the latter about two hundred years after the Deluge. Jupiter Belus was succeeded by Ninus, who founded many cities, particularly the great Nineveh. It was in the forty-first year of his reign, that was born the celebrated Patriarch Abraham, whose father was Terah, the son of Nahor. But Ninus, though a Prince not void of merit, was, in the fifty-second year of his reign, treacherously murdered by his consort Semiramis, a woman of a turbulent martial spirit, and who, among other achievements, slew in battle Zoroaster, King of the Bactrians, for his extraordinary knowledge reputed a magician. Having reduced the city of Babel, which had revolted, she inclosed it with a lofty stone wall, and of such a breadth that six carriages could go a-breast; on her demise, in the forty-first year of her reign, the succession devolved to Samhishnias, who has now reigned five years.

Pilgrim. Now, Father, come to that evil custom introduced by him under a plausible appearance.

Noah. It was the praying to and adoration of images, which he himself erected; for as Ninus had set up a statue to his father Belus, so have others; women, called on Pallas and Vesta, and this not only in memory of them, but as objects of veneration. Samhishnias went still farther, building temples to them as so
many

many deities, to the great dishonour of God, the author of all things : And this practice continues under the appearance of honouring God, that (which is a very melancholy consideration) Terah, the devout Abraham's own father, together with his whole kindred, were seduced into the abominable worship of strange gods ; which made me the more watchful over Abraham, daily warning him against the least deflection from the one eternal God. I think it were better for him to remove into another country, where he will not be exposed to the flatteries and insinuations of his relations ; for the love of the world is so infectious, that to guard against it, and preserve our virtue, well need we strictly walk as pilgrims : And his father Terah having left him much wealth, it is the more to be feared that he will be for building his nest here ; for though he be well principled, and has a solid zeal for truth and godliness, the example and persuasions of relations are very powerful. They invite to entertainments, and these must be returned. It is the custom ; and he who acts otherwise is despised, as a morose niggard. On the tables are brought the offerings to idols ; there is musick of all kinds ; delicious liquors are served in golden cups ; all parts shine with costly splendor ; then the talk is wholly about fine houses, furniture, and gardens, and enjoyments which set them above the common people. Alas ! thus circumstanced, how easily is a young heart ensnared ! or, at least, cooled in its religious purposes. Ah ! Son, of this I have known so many instances, that well may I be anxious about Abraham.

Pilgrim. Right, Father. But whither shall he remove ? You yourself intimated, that even since the Deluge mankind are relapsed into vice, idolatry, and profligacy.

Noah. The relapse is, indeed, deplorable ; yet are there still many sincere servants of the true God. In the South is a land, called Canaan, as the settlement of the descendents of Canaan ; there, and in a town
of

of his own building, called Salem, lives Melchisedeck, a devout holy Priest, who is likewise King, governing the people in quietness and piety, and worshiping the Almighty. I could wish that Abraham may become known to him; the conversation of such a man will cherish and invigorate his good principles.

Pilgrim. I had conceived, that the citizens of Heaven never built towns here below on this earth, but wandered, like pilgrims, living only in moveable tents.

Noah. Though, from necessity, they build houses and towns here, to them these are no more than a pilgrim's hut, their hearts not being settled on them, but breathing after their everlasting habitation. Farther, their building is quite of another nature than that of worldlings, as in all their proceedings there is a sublime, mysterious intendment; for they look not, like the others, to the things that are visible. As to this now small town of Salem, Oh! Son, were I to go about relating the events which, in course of time, shall be manifested in it, this day would not suffice; for wonderful are the prophecies concerning this place. My age will not allow me to think of living to see the fulfilling of any; but, some hundred years hence, posterity will be able to speak of wonderful things in the fate of Salem. It lies nearly in the center of the earth, and thus seems destined to be one of its most famous cities. I will say no more of it, but refer you to experience.

Pilgrim. As you please for that; but I cannot help thinking, that, whilst Abraham has such a guide and pattern as yourself, such an emigration is unadvisable.

Noah. That's what he himself says, and seems determined not to quit me whilst I am on earth, unless by a special command from God, when neither kindred, nor friends, nor any other considerations are to be regarded: And from my knowledge of his piety, I am confident it will be so with him.

Pilgrim. How the godly always love one another! and very fit it is they should, it being a love which is

of God, and leads to God, and on which depends their eternal happiness. It gives me a very sensible joy, that so many old and young still love and reverence you as a father. For, indeed, you naturally are the father of all, being older than any; and as they gradually differ in longevity, I should be glad to hear their respective ages.

Noah. As you are so desirous of knowledge, I answer your questions with pleasure. My son Sem is now about four hundred and fifty, Arphaxad three hundred and forty seven, Selah three hundred and twelve, Heber two hundred and eighty two. Peleg died about ten years since, in his two hundred and thirty ninth year. Reu is now in his two hundred and eighteenth; Serug in his hundred and eighty sixth. His son Nahor, who died nine years ago, was in his hundred and forty eighth. Terah is now a hundred and twenty seven years old; and his hopeful son Abraham fifty six.

Pilgrim. One thing not a little surprizes me.

Noah. What is that, Son?

Pilgrim. That though all whom you have named fall so far short of your years, yet have they very nearly the like appearance of age. There is Terah himself, your beloved Abraham's father, begins to grow grey; and his father, it seems, was but in his one hundred and twenty seventh year, when he died: This I cannot account for.

Noah. You must know, then, Son, that since the Deluge it has been God's pleasure to curtail the life of man; and thus they insensibly decrease in age and person. You now see no such huge giants, as in my time, before the flood: Alas! the present breed is quite diminutive in comparison of the Antediluvians; and though here and there a large man is to be seen, they are nothing like former times.

Pilgrim. Whence proceed these changes, Father?

Noah. From several causes; first the creation was originally, sound, vigorous, and complete, but now the
powers

powers of Nature being infeeble, cannot produce and support such large and lasting fruits. The vegetables have also suffered in their virtues, that they afford no such powerful medicaments. Then the absolute necessity of man's living so very long, for the propagation of the species, is now ceased. Thirdly, that men do not grow better by length of life, or strength and procerity of body, appears from the preceding sad examples. And man not being created so much for this temporal life as to live in eternal blessedness, it little imports whether their life be long or short, so it be well spent.

Pilgrim. Now, my dear aged Father, accept of my very humble thanks for your instruction and salutary counsels, and for your historical narratives, which have given me infinite satisfaction. I will trouble you no longer, and may that God, whom you have so faithfully served, receive you into his heavenly felicity, on your removal from this world, which, as you yourself said, naturally cannot be far off.

Noah. True, my Son, and heartily do I long for it; and no less heartily do I wish you the grace and favour of God. May he grant, that what you have heard from me, bring forth good fruit in you. Adieu, dear son, the Lord lift up the light of his countenance on you, and guide the steps of your pilgrimage in peace and godliness, that you may be admitted to the joys of the righteous, in his everlasting kingdom. Amen.

DIALOGUE III.

BETWEEN

The PILGRIM and SIMON CLEOPHAS.

In Two PARTS.

*The First containing the space of 1350 years,
from Abraham to the Babylonish Captivity.*

Pilgrim. **O**F the first world I obtained some knowledge, by the kind communicativeness of the two venerable Patriarchs Adam and Noah ; but since my conversation with the latter two thousand years being elapsed, and such a space must unquestionably have produced many strange and remarkable events ; I could wish to meet with a person of the same sense and dispositions, to give me a true and judicious account of these subsequent times : And my curiosity is the greater, as I find myself in the midst of the ruins of a large city, which has more the appearance of having been destroyed by war, than forsaken on account of any other calamity. It is plain, these stately edifices were burned down. The stones, in many places, are all over smoke, so that it cannot be very long since this disaster happened. What a glorious city this must have been ! The circuit and thickness of the walls ! That mountain, particularly, seems covered with stately ruins ! As for the few houses, run up here and there, they seem to occupy but a very small part of that which lies waste. Oh ! Yonder I see coming a man, who, by his age, is fit for my purpose, and his aspect speaks him courteous
and

and sensible. Good day, Father: Allow me a word or two with you.

Cleophas. God save you, Son. May I ask who you are?

Pilgrim. I am a pilgrim soul, very desirous of knowing the occurrences of ancient times; and as I have been wandering ever since the commencement of this system, it was my good fortune to fall in with Adam, and sometime after with Noah, of whom doubtless you have heard, and they both very kindly gave me an account of every thing within their knowledge. Since then, I have not exchanged a word with any one; and, finding myself here amidst the ruins of a very splendid city, I was wishing for some such person as yourself to inform me about its catastrophe, and the remarkable things which have come to pass since Noah's time.

Cleophas. That is a task rather too hard for such an old worn-out creature as I am, being now in my hundred and twentieth year. Besides, the care of the sheep recommended to me, leaves me but little spare time; and a detail of all those things would require not a few days, but months.

Pilgrim. This whets my curiosity: But, pray, are you a shepherd?

Cleophas. Yes, of men.

Pilgrim. If so, please look on me as one of your sheep, who comes to you to be fed with useful knowledge.

Cleophas. If so, I shall make no difficulty to comply with your desires; therefore we will go up yonder hill, called Sion.

Pilgrim. Where those old walls stand?

Cleophas. The same.

Pilgrim. It is very ugly clambering among these confused heaps of stones! Bless me, what beautiful buildings lie here, all ruined and razed! I cannot forbear grieving at the sad end of so much magnificence.

Cleophas.

Cleophas. If you are so affected with the bare sight of this desolation, how must it be with me, who was an eye-witness of it, and, what is still more—

Pilgrim. Why, Father, it draws tears from you.

Cleophas. Oh, the causes, the causes !

Pilgrim. What mean you ?

Cleophas. I mean the most just causes of its overthrow. Oh, the innocent blood shed within that proud city ! and especially the holy, righteous—

Pilgrim. Father, grief quite overcomes you—

Cleophas. The holy, righteous, and merciful Jesus—

Pilgrim. Jesus ? Who was he ?

Cleophas. I find you are very ignorant, indeed, of what has passed, and have conversed only with Adam and Noah : Though, had you rightly understood the mystery of their narratives, you would not have been so much wanting in true wisdom as you at first appear ; for I make no question but they gave you some insight into the way of salvation. Did they not ?

Pilgrim. Adam mentioned some promises made to him from God, and, by what he said, God seemed to have some particular view in the race of Seth. But, according to Noah, that race, no less than the offspring of Cain, were become so depraved, so profligate, and impious, that God caused the whole world to be overflowed ; and, after the restoration of it, the progeny of Noah, whose family had been preserved, gradually sunk into all the antediluvian impieties, that a truly good, pious man was scarce to be met with : Though there was one Abraham, and he far from old, for whom Noah had a particular esteem, as discerning in him, above any other, something devout and noble.

Cleophas. How mysterious are the divine workings !

Pilgrim. But this is nothing to the point in hand.

Cleophas. It is very much so ; but you yet see but dimly.

Pilgrim.

Pilgrim. Pray, may I ask why you was in such an agony of grief, that the tears so suddenly gushed from your eyes?

Cleophas. Besides the remembrance of the terrible excision of the city, it was the inhuman martyrdoms of so many just men; but chiefly the ignominy and torture inflicted on that dear, guiltless lamb. To crucify him who never injured any one! That adorable person! This was such a nefarious procedure, as might sink a whole country.

Pilgrim. But this is all dark to me. I wish, Father, you would be so good as to relate every thing in order of time; as thus the connection of the successive transactions would convey more pleasure and instruction.

Cleophas. That will, indeed, be better; but grief, and a very just grief, bewilders my reason. I will keep to order as much as I can; and, as for any digressions, you must impute them to my senility, and the affecting nature of the subject. I wish my tongue were as the pen of a good writer, that I might clearly exhibit to you all the interesting occurrences, which I have seen and heard of, exclusive of those transmitted down to us in the Holy Scriptures, and the tradition of our careful forefathers.

Pilgrim. Now I shall be obliged to you, no docile child listens with more pleasure and attention.

Cleophas. I shall begin from the most antient times; and, to what is contained in the Scriptures and traditions, add the events of my own times; and thus you will have a complete, and, I hope, instructive history. That Abraham, whom you saw walking with Sem, about twenty years after the death of Noah, Gen. xii. 1, &c. received an order from God, to remove out of the land of the Assyrians, into this where you now are, and he settled amidst those hills to the south-west, where, at that time, was a town called Hebron, the ruins of which are still to be seen; and near it a very delightful spot, called Mamre plain: And here

Abraham fixed his dwelling. God, finding him faithful in all things, promised that he would give to him, and his descendants, all the several countries, on all sides, which you see from this place, though at that time only a stranger, and without a single foot of land of his own; for these countries were possessed by different nations. This city, now Jerusalem, was called Salem, and here resided King Melchisedeck, a Prince of eminent piety, and likewise a Priest of the true God.

Pilgrim. Oh! is this Salem, which I remember Noah spoke of, as a city of which wonderful things were said? And is it at last come to such an end?

Cleophas. Yes, my Son, this is the Salem, which good Melchizedeck built, but its name was afterwards changed to Jebus, and, in process of time, partly revived in Jerusalem; for it is now above two thousand years since its first foundation. But to return

Gen. xii. 3. to Abraham: God farther promised, that in him and his seed all generations of the earth should be blessed. Now, Son, think what seed Adam spoke to you of, and wherefore God, amidst all vicissitudes and calamities, preserved the race of Seth, till Abraham; namely, that, from the beginning of the world down to the present time, a lineage might follow in regular descent, as from it was to be born he, in whom all blessings consist, and through whom the mercy of God has poured forth its super-abundant riches among all nations of the earth.

Pilgrim. Oh the goodness of God! And has this been fulfilled?

Cleophas. That I shall tell you; but you must previously be informed of the order in which this has been carried on, that you may, at once, have a know-

Gen. xii. 1. ledge of the revolutions of this city, of the causes of its destruction, and of the accomplishment of God's promises. Twenty years after those promises, God, contrary to all hope and ex-

Gen. xxii. 1. pectation, gave Abraham, in his old age, a son called Isaac, and to divest him still
more

more of all human hope, he ordered him to sacrifice that son, on the hill there, streight before us, within the old walls of the city, where you see the remains of a very grand edifice. At that time it was only a green hill, called Moriah, without any buildings on it; but God, seeing that Abraham made no difficulty of complying with the order, however his nature might relent, and was preparing to sacrifice his son, called to him from Heaven to forbear, and thus restored Isaac to him as from the dead, at the same time confirming the covenant of all generations being blessed in his seed.

Pilgrim. Had Abraham no other sons?

Cleophas. He had an elder son by his maid Hagar, but, by divine direction, both son and mother were turned out of the house; in which un-

Gen. xxi. 10, &c.

questionably lies much mystery, and still more in the beforementioned sacrifice of Isaac: For when I consider the severe trial of Abraham's faith, Isaac's extraordinary acquiescence, with the several circumstances, how he carried the wood for the sacrifice, how innocently he went up the hill, and his confidence, when nothing but death was before him, that it would end well, that I am lost in admiration, and the more, as I have seen the accomplishment of the whole mystery. O, Son, indulge me in my emotions.

Pilgrim. Most willingly; yet, I pray, some farther account of Isaac.

Cleophas. This Isaac, as we may suppose, had the most virtuous education, and walked in his father's steps: When only a boy he shewed an uncommon gentleness of nature, in bearing with the mockeries of his illegitimate brother, Ishmael; in his youth, an heroic obedience, in submitting to be slain as a sacrifice; in his riper years, great devotion and an active strength of faith, often laying aside all earthly ideas, and exercising himself in prayer and divine as-

Gen. xxiv. 2, &c.

pirations. To marry such a valuable son to a heathenish or alien woman would not have been agreeable

agreeable to Abraham's character: Accordingly, he sent one of his upper servants to seek a wife, worthy of him, among his own kindred.

Pilgrim. Did not Isaac, then, keep company with the young persons of the country, and look out for an advantageous match?

Cleophas. Ill would such views have suited those who professed themselves strangers and only sojourners on earth, and whose lively faith kept their eyes steadily looking forward to another country, of which they were citizens. Besides, such was his filial duty, that he would not have taken any step without his father's permission.

Pilgrim. A good son, indeed!

Cleophas. In the East, at that time, stood the town of Nahor, where, with her brother Laban, ver. 10, 11. who was of Abraham's family, lived a most virtuous damsel called Rebecca; and thither was the above servant sent, together with ten camels, laden with provisions and other things. This honest man, amidst all the varieties of his long journey, was still deliberating on the due discharge of his commission; and sensible that without the divine assistance all his circumspection and diligence would produce no good effect, he prostrated himself in prayer to ver. 12, 13, 14. God, to prosper his journey by some token. As he was resting at a well near the town, up comes Rebecca, who readily, as if she had known his message, let him drink out of her pitcher, ver. 15, &c. and gave his camels water. This courtesy was returned with presents of bracelets, rings, and other ornaments; which her brother Laban ver. 30, &c. seeing, invited the stranger to his house; and there the purport of his coming being made known, together with his prayer and the token he had desired of God, the whole family immediately closed with the proposal, as manifestly of divine appointment.

Pilgrim.

Pilgrim. How different from the generality of matches, which are carried on with flattery and deceit, and the only aim sensual delight or interest.

Cleophas. True, and the consequences are accordingly; disgust, quarrels, hatred, and divorces. It is divine love, or godliness, which is the surest tye of hearts!

Pilgrim. How was it, in the mean time, with good Isaac?

Cleophas. He committed all his concerns to God, and prayed that his heart might be kept in a constant deference to the divine will, whatever was the issue; till, one evening, being in the Gen. xxiv. 63. field, he saw the camels returning, and being by the servant informed of the success of his journey, he went to meet his bride, and led her to his father's house, where she was joyfully received. Such was Isaac's fondness for his dear Rebecca, that his grief for the death of his mother gradually wore off. The family were all alert in their several employments, and took a pleasure in dispatching whatever their young mistress directed. The aged Abraham was so rejoiced, seeing his son blest with so excellent a spouse, that he seemed to bloom with fresh youth. To be sure, an union of hearts is life's sweetest cordial.

Pilgrim. Had Abraham any other children?

Cleophas. He had even some children afterwards, but Isaac was the sole heir, both Gen. xxv. 2, &c. of the substance and the divine promise, which was the greatest wealth: For otherwise, as to temporal grandeur, there was Armatrides the King of Assyria, Osiris of Egypt, and Atlas the famous astronomer, his cotemporaries, who infinitely surpassed him, being possessed of large dominions; and as for length of life, none came near Sem, the son of Noah, who could tell a thousand things both of the first and second world, being in his six hundredth year when he resigned his soul to the God of his life.

Pilgrim.

Pilgrim. I perceive that the paternal benediction reaches farther than this transitory world: And to whom did it descend after Isaac?

Cleophas. Oh, Son, much is to be said on that head. Isaac had two sons; of whom Esau, as the eldest, was intitled to the privileges of primogeniture, but not knowing its value, and returning one day from hunting, exceeding hungry, sold it to his brother Jacob, at so low a rate as a mess of pottage.

Pilgrim. A strange folly, indeed! Could he be in his right senses?

Cleophas. As much as they who renounce heavenly things for those of earth. How many do we see preferring fleeting, pernicious pleasures, to the everlasting felicity! Futurity, say they, is a great way off; I'll make the most of the present.

Pilgrim. But, I suppose, Esau repented his folly.

Cleophas. Yes, he grew extremely concerned; but it was too late. I will give you the whole history. He thought the agreement was still to be frustrated, and was for defrauding Jacob of the blessing, and, had it not been for Rebecca's prudence, would have gained his ends. For Isaac, now blind with age, and knowing nothing of the transaction between his sons, sent Esau a hunting to get some venison, that, having eat it, he might lay his hands on his head, and thus impart the blessing to him; but Rebecca, who had overheard the affair, dressed some savoury meat, and sent Jacob with it to his father, who, pleased with his supposed diligence, immediately laid his hands on Jacob's head, thus transferring the blessing to his younger son; and the just God, to whom all hearts are open, confirmed it to his progeny. But now Esau returns, eagerly dresses his venison, and carries it in to his father, from whom he soon heard that Jacob had been before-hand with him. At this his

Gen. xxvii.
1, 2, 3, 4.

ver. 25.

ver. 30, &c.

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his countenance was changed; he broke out into invectives and threatnings against his brother; then, falling on his knees, with a flood of tears begged a blessing of his father; who, tenderly sympathizing with his agonies, assured him that his descendents should enjoy great worldly prosperity, and one day become independent; but as for the promise of the Messiah, that was irrevocable.

Pilgrim. How did he behave afterwards?

Cleophas. As one of a rugged and ferocious disposition, contracted, perhaps, by his extreme delight in field sports. He harboured an implacable grudge against his brother, and was not wanting to give several plain indications that he meditated some mischief. Then he had married two Canaanitish women, who were continually carping at his father and mother, which grieved the old folks exceedingly. As this storm daily increased, they warned Jacob, who, indeed, was their favourite, against marrying alien women, and counselled him also to beware of his brother's resentment, and, to prevent both these evils, determined to send him to his uncle Laban, who lived far off in the East.

ver. 42, &c.

Gen. xxviii.
1, &c.

The young man implicitly submitted to their will; and having received from his father a fervent renewal of the benediction, he set out with only a staff in his hand.

Pilgrim. This seemed little to agree with the blessings promised him.

Cleophas. Very little, indeed. He travelled through that delicious country, which was every where interspersed with orchards of figs and pomgranates, with olive-yards, vineyards, corn-fields, and meadows. On the hills were feeding numerous herds and flocks of kine, sheep, and goats. He saw the peasants dancing and frolicking, whilst he himself was but a vagrant pilgrim, without any settlement.

Pilgrim.

Pilgrim. This must naturally have excited some dejection in the young man.

Cleophas. Great is the force of faith, yet was he not totally without fluctuations, doubts, and uneasy apprehensions; but the Lord God encouraged
 ver. 10, 11. him by a vision in the night. Yonder,

northward, is a town, now called Bethel: Jacob, being benighted there, laid himself down on the ground, with his head on a stone; yet, hard as his couch was, his
 ver. 12. soul felt the sweetest refreshments; he saw the

heavens open, and a ladder reaching up to it, with angels ascending and descending on it, as if offering all manner of kind offices to him, and at the same time shewing, that tho' the divine purposes seem sometimes to rise and sometimes to fall, yet is the end al-
 ver. 13, 14, 15. ways happy. This vision was accom-

panied with a voice, assuring him of the divine protection and good will, and all the promised
 ver. 16, &c. blessings. Jacob, awaking, praised God for

such an astonishing token of his presence; every thing, he thought, wore a sacredness, and the stone, on which he slept, he set up as a memorial of the vision, pouring oil on it. Then he chearfully prosecuted his journey.

Pilgrim. How was it, in the mean time, with Esau?

Cleophas. He enjoyed no such tranquillity. Do you observe yonder, in the south, some hills not unlike clouds? Thither Esau withdrew, with some others like him, robust, savage men, living by hunting and rapine. Here he became very powerful, but still rankling with envy and revenge, than which no body needs any greater tortures. Divine solacements he was an utter stranger to: Instead of the company of angels, he was surrounded by his abandoned roysters, who could talk of nothing but hunting, outrage, rapine, and debauchery; a conversation as different from the former, as the light of the sun, from dark midnight.

Pilgrim.

Pilgrim. True, Father; but now I would hear farther of Jacob?

Cleophas. That dutiful son, animated by faith, travelled on, till at length drawing near to the town of Haran, in Mesopotamia, he Gen. xxix.
1, 2, 3, 4. stopped at a well, where the shepherds watered their flocks; and beginning to enquire of them about Laban; here comes his daughter Rachel, said they, with her flock. Her modest deportment and beauty charmed Jacob, and his heart intimated to him, that this lovely damsel, was the bride his ver. 10. parents had spoke to him of. Though much fatigued, he exerted an uncommon strength in removing a huge stone from the well, that ver. 11. Rachel's sheep might drink; and with all the marks of a respectful love he made himself known to her; an account of this was soon carried to Laban, who, moved by a divine impulse, hastened to meet him, embraced and kissed him, ver. 13. and invited him into his house. It was soon ver. 18. agreed that Jacob should serve Laban seven years, and at the expiration of them, Rachel to be given him in marriage: The long term of seven years seemed to him but a day, for the love he had to her. ver. 20. Regardless of the frosty nights and sultry days, he assiduously tended Laban's flocks, often sweetening his trouble with Rachel's conversation, relating to her the history of the Patriarchs and his family, and the blessings hereditarily annexed to it; what ravishing intercourses he had with God during his journey, and talked fervently on the unperishable reward, which the virtue of faith brings with it. What pleasure must two souls of such a cast, united together in purest love, have had together, while tending their fleecy charge, singing pastoral hymns, talking of the happiness of being in the love of God, and other subjects, which check all indecent thoughts, and wonderfully gladden the minds, and strengthen the heart in piety.

piety. When the sun had passed seven times through the Zodiac, and was drawing near to the eighth sign,

ver. 21. Jacob thought he might, without offence, move for the recompence of his service;

but Laban said, "In our country the younger must not be married before the elder," and gave him first Leah, and soon after Rachel, but for whom he was to serve another seven years; Jacob continued with Laban fourteen years longer, in which time he had twelve sons, afterwards called the twelve Patriarchs of Israel.

Pilgrim. In such a large family, I think many things must have happened.

Cleophas. Aye, Jacob had vexation enough with his sons. Then Laban, his father-in-law, dealt very unkindly by him. But the worst was, his consternation at meeting his brother unexpectedly on his return home.

Pilgrim. That I should be glad to hear.

Cleophas. As the good man was quietly passing through the country, with his wives, children, a train of servants, and cattle of all kinds, so richly had God blessed him, and was pleasing himself with the thoughts of seeing his parents again, after an absence of above

Gen. xxxii. 6. twenty years, advice is brought him, "See, thy brother Esau cometh to meet thee, and

four hundred men with him." This threw him into a violent panic, and from his brother's fierceness he thought all was lost, and that he should certainly fall

ver. 9, 10, 11, a victim to his rage. The women scream-
12. ed, the children trembled and cried. At

length Jacob, being a little composed, implored the divine succour. Then dividing all that was

Gen. xxxiii. 3. with him into three bands, he moved forward; and when he came in sight of his

brother, whose attendants made a frightful appearance, he, his wives and children, and servants, all with great respect bowed seven times to the ground. This

ver. 4. so affected Esau, that he ran to Jacob, embraced him, and fell on his neck and kissed

him,

him, as if there never had been any variance between them, whilst his attendants leaned on their spears, wondering at such a change: And Jacob praised God, who hath the hearts of the mighty in his hands, and turneth them as he pleases.

Pilgrim. How chearfully must they have travelled on? Jacob, from being a lonely, wayfaring man, seeing himself surrounded with children, servants, and cattle; how must their faith have been strengthened by the consideration of the Lord's wonderful dealings towards them!

Cleophas. A good observation! In the prosecution of his journey he came into the land of Canaan, and pitched his tents at the city of Shechem. The defilement of his daughter Dinah by the Prince of the country, and the severe revenge which two of his sons took for the injury done their sister, killing the Prince and his father, with many more, and spoiling the city, to the great displeasure of all the neighbouring nations, I only mention. There is also another very singular and remarkable history; but it will be best to defer it till another time. The recollection of so many particulars is too much for my age; and, after all, to you it may seem tedious.

Pilgrim. No, Father: By all means suppress not this history. You would relate every thing, did you know the pleasure your conversation gives me.

Cleophas. I shall scarce be able to go fluently through it, for it contains much and important mystery. One of these twelve sons, Joseph, being remarkably beautiful in his person, and of a most endearing behaviour, was so envied by his brethren, that all his meek carriage, his readiness to serve them, his submissive manner of speaking, could not procure him so much as a kind look from them, much less the familiar cordiality of brethren.

Pilgrim. That was strange malignity. One would think, there must have been some grounds for it.

Cleophas. What grounds could there be from a youth of such gentle dispositions? But jealousy is a wretched passion. They made a clamour, that their father loved him better than them all together, as the
ver. 3. very image of his mother Rachel. What they particularly stomached was, Jacob's giving him a very shewy gown, which reached down to his heels. He could not forbear acquainting his father of his unhappy situation; and this embittered them, so that they could not bear the sight of him, but took all occasions of browbeating and insulting him. Now the more the father observed this treatment, the more he loved Joseph for his virtue and gentleness. All this, however, might have blown over, without one very remarkable circumstance, which galled them more than any thing.

Pilgrim. And, pray, what was that?

Cleophas. You must know, God had some particular views, of which this youth was to be the instrument, as he generally exalts the meek above the high-minded; and of this he gave intimations in two
ver. 5, 6, &c. dreams, which Joseph, in the simplicity of his heart, told to his brethren. The first was, that they were all binding sheaves in the field, and his sheaf, rearing itself upright, all the others stood round and made obeisance to it. The second was, that the sun, and moon, and eleven stars, paid him the like homage. This imprinted in their hearts an indelible rancour. What, said they, do you set up to be King over us? It appears, however, that they, in their own thoughts, did not look on these dreams as mere idle fancies; yet they determined to traverse and effectually defeat the consequences: But the Almighty disappointed them. As for Jacob, though these dreams seemed somewhat strange to him, yet he laid them to heart, as of prophetic import.

Pilgrim.

Pilgrim. Well, and did any thing follow hereupon?

Cleophas. Yes, indeed, and things well worth recording. Not long after, these brothers, for the sake of better pasture for their herds and flocks, went to a part of the country at some distance from their home; and their father, longing to hear some news of them, sent his dear Joseph to find them out. After wandering about the country, he was informed of the place where their flocks were at pasture. This gave him great joy; for all their ill usage had not extinguished his brotherly affection. Far otherwise was it with them; for no sooner had they sight of him, than one was for throwing him into a pit, another was for killing him outright. Reuben, the eldest of all, sensible what a horrid sin it would be to murder their brother, and bring such sorrow on their father's grey hairs, did all he could to appease them, and save the youth. Now he comes up and mildly salutes them; but, before he could speak, was received with the most abusive language and threatnings. "You are the dreamer, are you? This spark is to be our King! We will soon find means to disappoint you." Well might the poor youth then say, "I am become a stranger among my own brethren, and my mother's children know me not." He threw himself on his knees, begging they would spare his life; but their rage was not to be softened by a brother's agonies. They tore off the shewy coat, which at first had been such an eye-fore to them, as a token of his father's singular love. Sometimes he looked about mournfully, to see if none pitied him. He sought comfort, but found none; for they who had pity on him durst not speak in his behalf: 'Till at last Reuben found out an expedient for saving him, at the same time seeming to close with the cruelty of the others, and moved for throwing him into a pit, in which there happened to be no water,

ver. 12.

ver. 13, 14;
15, 16.

ver. 18, 19;
20.

ver. 23.

ver. 24.

with an intent privately to get him out again, and carry him to his father. This somewhat quieted the uproar, and they sat down to eat and drink, leaving Joseph in the pit, forsaken, and, in all appearance, there to perish! How often did the afflicted youth call to mind the embraces and fond expressions of his parents, of which and all human comfort he now saw himself deprived? And what raised no small conflict in him was, that God's promises, intimated to him in his dreams, seemed now utterly quashed. You may imagine how his troubled soul cried from the deep, "O God, be not far from me; for here is no helper. Fierce bulls have encompassed me, fat oxen have surrounded me; they open their mouths wide against me, like ravenous lions. They have parted my garments among them. Lord, be not far from me; make haste to help me!" Thus continued he praying and wailing, his disconsolate mind tossed to and fro like a ship without a rudder.

Pilgrim. O distress! how thou ledest the soul to God, its creator and helper! But were not the brothers, when they came to bethink themselves, sorry for what they had done?

Cleophas. Some, particularly Reuben, pleaded Joseph's boyish simplicity, and the sorrow his death would bring on their father; and went so far as to say, that after such a deed they must expect curses instead of a blessing: For, if his father had been so offended at the slaying of the Sichemites, how would he bear this injury done to his favourite son? Another, hotly starting up, answered: "He deserves to die, if ever man did, for pretending to be our King; and, should he once get the power into his hands, soon shall we feel the weight of them: So I am sure it is better he die, than every one of us." Another, moved with the like envy, cried out, "All the disturbances in the family are his doings: If he knew the least ill of us, immediately it was carried to the old folks, and hence the many sour looks we had from them. The best way is at once to make

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make away with him, and thus convince him of the vanity of his dreams, which puffed the young gentleman up so; especially as our father himself was brought to believe there might be something in them."

Pilgrim. What course did Reuben take, seeing the current so strong against him?

Cleophas. He stole away, with a design privately to help Joseph out of the pit, and send him home; but herein he was disappointed.

Pilgrim. That was a pity! I long to hear the upshot.

Cleophas. Oh, Son, the ways of God surpass our comprehension: Whilst they were deliberating on their brother's death, Judah, one of them, looking up, saw some merchants on their way to Egypt: On which he strongly represented ver. 25, 26,
27. to them, how much better it would be to sell their brother for a slave, to be carried into a distant country, than imbrue their hands in his blood, and that it would equally frustrate his dreams, as he would be heard of no more. The motion was approved of, and all went to get Joseph out of the pit. At sight of his brothers the poor youth trembled and cried, concluding they came to make an end of him. He was now driven towards the merchants: But how different his appearance from what it used to be, when with his fond parents! His eyes swollen with tears, his visage aghast, his apparel all soiled and torn. In this condition, Judah sold him to the merchants for twenty—

Pilgrim. Father, your tears return upon you. Compose yourself.

Cleophas. Oh! It brings to my mind another Judas, a vile wretch, who treacherously sold a person, such a person!—But his history does not come in here.

Pilgrim. Proceed then, I intreat you.

Cleophas. This tractable youth, I say, ver. 28. worth all the rest put together, was sold for twenty pieces of silver, and carried away, not with-

out many a melancholy look towards his brethren, and the part of his country where his father lived.

Pilgrim. But how fared it with Reuben, who had withdrawn?

Cleophas. This good brother, going to ver. 29, 30. the pit, and not finding Joseph, full of concern runs to his brothers: "What is become of Joseph? He is not in the pit. Whither shall I betake myself? How can I look my father in the face? What can I answer, when he shall call me to an account about the boy? I already see the tears streaming down his furrowed cheeks. His face, his gestures, speak the deadly anguish of his heart. How cheerfully should I have returned home, with Joseph safe? Now home is no place for me. The very trees, and herbs, and beasts, are all against me, and reproach my breach of trust. I know not which way to turn myself. Oh! day of woe!" His brothers now became affected, and their consciences smote them for their inhumanity. They stretched their necks, looking towards Egypt; but Joseph was now irrecoverable. All that remained was some device for concealing this foul deed from their father, who now began to expect his dear Joseph, with news of all being well with his brothers?

Pilgrim. How the poor, aged parents must have looked, at missing their dear child! What did they contrive to appease them?

Cleophas. They killed a goat, and, tear- ver. 31, 32. ing Joseph's coat, they dipped some parts of it in the blood; and not thinking it adviseable to return home so suddenly, they sent the bloody coat to their father, with this message, "See whether this be thy son's coat: we found it in this condition."

Pilgrim. Such fallacy, to impose on a father! And how did it succeed?

Cleophas. Oh! there is no expressing the father's grief at the sad tale. He rent his cloaths, ver. 33, 34. and put on sackcloth. Alas! cried he, it

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is my son's coat. Some wild beast has torn my dear Joseph to pieces, and devoured him. And when his children would suggest any thing to abate these violent emotions, instead of lending an ear to them, he would cry out with greater vehemence, "Alas! the comfort of my age is no more. My grey hairs will go with sorrow to the grave! This is a misfortune which I cannot survive!"

Pilgrim. How did Jacob's sons, the authors of the calamity, behave?

Cleophas. They found that they had deceived themselves. Instead of the quiet they promised themselves, their conscience was an incessant torture to them. They every day saw and heard their old father's lamentations for the untimely death of his favourite son. Then the dread that their crime would come to light. That evil beast Envy had devoured their entrails, and remorse was preying on them without respite; and more furiously than the beast, which, they pretended, had devoured Joseph. Then some afflictions which befell them bore the manifest marks of God's punitive vengeance, and that his scourge was over them. Judah, who sold him, lost his two sons, who besides were both very wicked; and God gave him to see his error, in condemning to death the widow of one of his sons, for a deed of which he was himself guilty. Others never knew a moment's quiet, for fear their guilt, concealed by such a train of lying and dissimulation, should transpire. Oh! how their consciences wrung them, at seeing their aged father's distress! They now would have given the world that Joseph had been brought safe home. But their repentance was too late. Sorrow and the pangs of guilt haunted them continually.

Pilgrim. Such are the wages of sin. But was Joseph heard of no more?

Cleophas. The merchants exposed him, with their other goods, to sale at Memphis, the capital of Egypt; and Potiphar, a great officer at court, taken with the youth's appearance and behaviour, bought him, and treated him with exceeding kindness. At length, more and more convinced of his fidelity, he committed every thing to his care, and made him his chief officer, so that now Joseph lived in a splendor unknown in his father's house. He had his own particular table and equipage, he kept the best of company, and was esteemed and carested by every body; circumstances not a little pleasing to nature, and of a tendency to make him forget his home. He was now in a state beyond the reach of his malicious brethren.

Pilgrim. This has much the appearance of a fulfilment of his dreams.

Cleophas. No, no; he had other trials to pass through. God, indeed, designed to exalt him; but it was through many sufferings. The particulars, indeed, are surprizing; but they may be thought tedious, as they do not concern you.

Pilgrim. As for me, nothing would be more agreeable than to hear the issue of these adventures.

Cleophas. In the height of this sunshine a storm arose, which seemed to threaten Joseph with utter ruin. Potiphar's spouse unhappily became enamoured with him; and such was her impatience, as all earthly passions are productive of disquietude, that she could not forbear plainly signifying it to him. But the young man, being of a very opposite disposition, stood full of amazement and concern. The fear of God, and fidelity to his master, determined him against her desire; yet to have treated her abruptly, or exposed her, was not altogether advisable. He discreetly bore with her intimations for some time; ver. 7. till once, lost to all sense of modesty, she ver. 8, 9. flatly said, "Lie with me." He then took upon

upon him to advise her against such an ill-placed passion, and remonstrated what a horrid requital it would be for all his lord's goodness to him, besides sinning also against God. But this was throwing oil into the fire; for beauty and virtue joined are powerful attractives, and her love now became more and more violent. She was continually urging him, and strove to work on him by promises of greater wealth and preferment. He was like one taken up to the top of a mountain, with all the delights and glories of the world before his eyes, in order to seduce him from virtue, as I remember of one who lies very near my heart.

Pilgrim. Father, such deep thoughts affect you too much. Forbear weeping, and proceed in your astonishing narrative.

Cleophas. I will. Joseph, perceiving matters to grow worse, shunned her as much as he could; which both irritated her, and inflamed her passion. At last she determined to risk all; and watching a time when nobody was near, and Joseph busy about his accounts, she caught him by his cloaths, ver. 11, 12. saying, "Thou shalt absolutely lie with me: At thy peril deny me." But this was storming a wall of brass; and he was so shocked at her impudicity, that, disengaging himself from her, he left his robe in her hands, and fled. Immediately her love turned to the hottest resentment; rage flamed in her eyes; and, to begin her revenge, she made the house ring with her shrieks and screams. All the servants, men and maids, could not imagine what could be the matter, but came running to her; who affected an extreme disorder, and, with Joseph's coat in her hand, inveighed against him as a vile Hebrew, a monster of ingratitude and insolence, who had dared to make an attempt on her honour. They were all amazed, having never seen the least indecency in all Joseph's deportment; however, he was soon seized. On Potiphar's ver. 17, 18.

return

return to his house, this fallen woman, all in tears, and sobbing and sighing, accused Joseph as above, and, in confirmation of her tale, pointed to his

ver. 19.

coat. This nobleman was scarce himself for concern no less than anger. He reproached Joseph in the most severe, yet the most affecting terms; and though the supposed affront prompted him to be his own avenger, yet the consideration how his affairs had prospered under Joseph's management, together with his faithful, discreet, and courteous behaviour in every respect, made him content himself with

ver. 20.

confining him in the King's prison.

Pilgrim. It is strange, how lying can put on such specious airs; what a change of fortune was here! I suppose it occasioned a general astonishment.

Cleophas. The news, you must think, soon spread, and nothing else was talked of; some shook their heads, crying, "Now, thou hypocritical villain, thou art rewarded for thy insolence;" others, "See how he looks; he has helped others out of difficulties, now let us see what he can do for himself; or let him call on that God he talked so much of, to open the prison doors;" some again, knowing how fantastical and ungovernable women are in their passions, privately pitied the young man, but durst not speak their minds.

Pilgrim. But how did Joseph behave?

Cleophas. He sought support from Heaven. "Lord, cried he, in thee is my trust, deliver me from my persecutors; take my cause in hand; save my life from the devices of the wicked, and cause my innocence to

ver. 21, 22, 23,

appear. Accordingly God, in whom he trusted, did not forsake him; he shewed him how he ruleth the hearts of men, giving him favour in the sight of the keeper of the prison, who caused his fetters to be taken off, and intrusted him with the care of all the prisoners.

Pilgrim. Did he continue long under this unjust confinement.

Cleophas.

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Cleophas. Who knows whether he ever would have recovered his liberty, had it not been for a singular occurrence, directed, certainly, by the finger of God: The King's chief butler and baker were, for some misdemeanor, brought to the prison, of which Joseph now had the superintendency. Each happened to have a dream, which much troubled them, and the more, as no interpreter was to be had. Joseph's compassionate temper led him to ask why they looked so sorrowful. The butler related to him his dream; that he thought he saw three vines with ripe grapes, and that he squeezed them into Pharaoh's cup. On which Joseph, according to the wisdom given him by God, answered: "Within three days you will be restored to your office. Then, I pray, mention me to the King, that I may be released." This encouraged the baker also to relate his dream, which was; that he had three white baskets on his head with all manner of baked meats, and the birds flew to them and eat them. "I am sorry for thy fate, said Joseph, but within three days thou wilt be hanged, and the birds will prey on thy flesh;" all which came to pass.

Gen. xl. 1, 2, 3,

ver. 4, 5,

ver. 6, 7,

ver. 9, 10, 11,

ver. 12, 13,
14, 15.

ver. 17, &c.

ver. 19, 20,
21.

Pilgrim. To be known to the Great proves often very advantageous; for I conclude that, by the butler's recommendation, Joseph soon came to breathe a free air.

Cleophas. Not at all. Do not you know that there is no trust in man, especially those in high life. That courtier was too much taken up with the enjoyments to which he had been restored, to bestow a thought on wretches in prison; but God, who worketh all things according to his will and pleasure, heard his supplications, and brought about his deliverance.

Pilgrim. That gives me pleasure.

Cleophas.

Cleophas. At a time when the court minded nothing but feasts and sports, when Joseph had been two years in expectation of hearing from the butler, to whom he had prophesied so auspiciously, and thirteen years after the inhuman sale of him, and when he himself apprehended death, or perpetual imprisonment,

Gen. xli. 1. Pharaoh became much troubled, by reason of two strange dreams in one night; and among all the magicians and soothsayers of Egypt, ver. 8. not one could offer any interpretation. Now

was the court full of melancholy; no feasting nor music; and the public shared in the trouble of their Sovereign. Now the butler, thinking it would

ver. 9, &c. be for his own interest, mentioned Joseph to the King, informing him of the interpretation of his dream, when in prison. Immediately Joseph,

ver. 14. being taken out of prison and decently clothed, was brought to the King, who, after a few questions, said, "I dreamed that there

ver. 17. came up out of the river seven fat kine, and soon after seven lean kine, which ate up all the fat.

The second dream was of seven full and sightly ears of corn, which, in like manner, were devoured by seven thin and withered." Hereupon Joseph, ascribing the

ver. 25. honour of his knowledge to God, said, That the second dream was only a confirmation

of the first, which signified, That there should be seven years of an extraordinary abundance of all things, but succeeded by seven barren years, when the famine

ver. 33, &c. should be such as to consume all the plenty of the former; wherefore it was advisable

to appoint some prudent man to lay up corn during the seven plentiful years, that in the barren years the people might not perish for want of sustenance.

The King and his council were greatly

ver. 37. amazed at this knowledge and wisdom, in one scarce arrived at manhood; and, on deliberation, it was unanimously agreed, that no properer person for

the

the above important charge could be found than Joseph. Then the King, taking off his ring, put it on Joseph's hand, with a gold chain about his neck, and caused him to be richly attired and to ride in a chariot; proclamation being made before him, "Bow the knee."

Pilgrim. The depths of God's ways!

Cleophas. The people were now more astonished than at his imprisonment. Every one ran to see him. His enemies gave themselves over for lost. The populace shouted. All the talk was about this exaltation of Zaphnath Paaneah, (the name given him by Pharaoh.) But greater still was their wonder, at seeing the foundations laid for a vast number of very large grainaries for laying up the surplus of grain. The oldest men could not conceive that the river Nile, to which Egypt owes its fertility, would seven years successively water the country in such a proper degree; or that the heat of the sun, when the waters were gone off, could produce such an exuberant affluence. This produced an universal joy. The thoughtless commonalty indulged themselves in excesses; the farmers made themselves sure of getting estates; and the labouring people had their bread cheap. There was no such thing as poverty to be seen; the stately kine, feeding in the luxuriant pastures, resembled those of Pharaoh's dream; and the whole country made a most delightful appearance.

Pilgrim. As the first part of Pharaoh's dream was thus fulfilled, I apprehend the woeful part followed.

Cleophas. In the first barren year the inundation of the Nile was inconsiderable, and followed by an excessive heat, which burned up every thing. The poor beasts stood lowing in the fields, wanting both herbage and water, the ground was every where cracked, the plough stood still, the reapers and mowers wanted employment: But there being yet plenty of corn in the grainaries, this reverse made but little impression. But the second year was more sensibly felt. Every place shewed dejected mothers, and children crying for hunger.

hunger. It was, indeed, lamentable to hear the ejulations and bewailings. Oh, how earnestly they looked towards the South, for any little cloud presaging rain; or whether the Nile did not begin to swell a little; for now it was become so shallow, as scarce to cover the crocodiles, or larges fishes. Then, like a prudent

ver. 56:

steward, Joseph opened his stores, and sold the corn at an equitable rate, at the same time acquiring immense riches to his Prince.

Pilgrim. Did other countries labour under the like scarcity?

Cleophas. Yes, and particularly the land of Canaan, lying nearly in the same climate. There also the Heaven was brass, and the earth iron; and, what made it worse, no provision had been made against this dreadful time.

Pilgrim. That was miserable, indeed! But was it not noised abroad, that there was corn in Egypt?

Cleophas. Yes, yes: Besides, they every day saw mules and asses, laden with corn, in great numbers sent for by Zaphnath Paaneah, (whose prudence was every where cried up,) to supply the empty grainaries; that, as far as possible, the grievous distress might be alleviated. But your question reminds me of not the least remarkable part of the story, which, otherwise, my decayed memory might have omitted; and it relates to the accomplishment of Joseph's prophetic dreams.

Pilgrim. Then I am very glad I interrupted you.

Cleophas. Jacob's family being reduced to the last extremity, he sent his sons with asses and empty sacks into Egypt; and on their arrival in the capital, they applied to the Ruler of the land, that corn might be sold to them, having brought money for that purpose.

Pilgrim. The wonderful disposition of God! And, pray, what followed?

Cleophas. Seeing him sitting on a throne, amidst grave Counsellors and military Officers, in splendid habiliments, they with the greatest

Gen. xlii.
1, &c.

ver. 6

greatest reverence prostrated themselves before him, and this was the bowing down of the sheaves in the first dream.

Pilgrim. Thus they, unknowingly, confirmed the dream, and did voluntarily, what they had stuck at nothing to prevent. Oh wisdom divine! how unequal is man to thee! And how did Joseph behave to them?

Cleophas. He immediately knew them; but, so far from making himself known ver. 7, 8, 9. to them, he charged them with being spies; on which, to clear themselves, they entered into a particular account of their family, their aged father, and the number of their brethren, of whom they said, one was no more, meaning the very person to whom they were speaking, little thinking that their brother was, as it were, risen from the dead. Besides, the great difference of dress, and the pomp of his station, threw no little disguise on him, especially making use of an interpreter, as if a stranger to their language.

Pilgrim. A good artifice to carry on the deception: But I admire his generosity, in not rewarding them according to their works, as they had so well deserved it.

Cleophas. So far was he from any vindictive thoughts, that it was with much difficulty he refrained from tears, at their distress. He appeared satisfied with their justification, treated them ver. 25. kindly, and, besides filling their sacks, ordered their money also to be put in. Though, as a trial of their probity, and to bring them to reflect on ver. 24. their crime, Simeon was bound before their

eyes, and so to remain till they brought their youngest brother, Benjamin, before him. This touched them to the quick, and renewed all the pangs of their remorse; they accused each other; "This we have deserved for our treatment of our brother Joseph, that when we saw the anguish of his soul, we ver. 22. turned the deaf ear to his intreaties. Did not I, said Reuben, advise you against doing any harm

harm to the child; but no, nothing could dissuade you from it, and now his blood is required of us." Now, how this must affect Joseph, who understood every word of their altercation, I leave you to judge.

Pilgrim. Very true, Father; and now Simeon, in his confinement, had time enough to repent of his inhumanity. But what passed in their return homewards?

Cleophas. They had a great deal of talk ver. 27, 28. about what had happened; but there is no expressing their amazement, when, opening the sacks to feed their asses, they found each man his money. They were totally at a loss how to account for it. Their father also was not a little concerned at missing Simeon; and much more, at hearing that they must never see the Ruler's face without their youngest brother. This went near his heart; "Joseph, he said, is no more, and Simeon you left in prison, and now you are also for carrying away my youngest child, the comfort of my age."

Pilgrim. Poor man! But what was the issue?

Cleophas. The corn, which they had brought, was drawing near to an end, yet Jacob could not be prevailed on to part with Benjamin. One would be bound for his safety, another offered to give his sons as pledges; but at length, yielding to the joint requests of all the family, and the severe exigency, he committed Benjamin to the care of his brothers; who immediately set out, carrying with them some presents for the Ruler.

Pilgrim. Thus the strongest purposes of man gave way to necessity.

Cleophas. They made their second appearance before Joseph, who received them ver. 15. very courteously, but he had chiefly eyed Benjamin. They lay before him prostrate again, confirming ver. 16. the truth of the dream. But what threw them into a maze, was their being invited to dine with Joseph, and placed at table according to their age, and

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and the distinction paid to Benjamin. However, the day following they found themselves in greater perplexity than ever. Joseph had ordered their sacks to be filled; and, besides their money, his cup was put into Benjamin's sack, as a pretence for detaining him. They went their way very chearfully, concluding that they should carry Benjamin home safe and sound, and all would be well; but whilst they were talking of the Ruler's great affability, and how well they seemed to stand with him, a party of horsemen came up, their leader calling out, "Stop; one of you has played the thief, and carried away my master's cup. Is this your requital of his kindness?" All peremptorily denied it, saying, "We scorn any such thing; and if the cup be found on any of us, be death his portion, and we will be your lord's slaves." On this the sacks were searched, and the cup found in Benjamin's. Now they wept and rent their cloaths, crying out, "What will become of us?" When brought before Joseph, he upbraided them with ingratitude and dishonesty, and insisted on keeping Benjamin as his slave. They stood pale and motionless with consternation, till Judah related their father's affliction, and that, if they returned without Benjamin, it would certainly bring down his grey hairs with sorrow to the grave; at the same time offering to be a slave in Benjamin's stead. This was seconded by tears and cries from all the others.

Pilgrim. But how could Joseph's tender heart bear so affecting a spectacle?

Cleophas. Hitherto he had kept them on the rack, but could now no longer withhold, and with a flood of joyous tears cried out, "I am Joseph, your brother: Is my dear father still living?" Terror now succeeded confusion and amazement; and with the most benign air he said,

H

"Come,

Gen. xlv.
1, 2.

ver. 4, 5.

ver. 7, 8, 9.

ver. 12.

ver. 13.

ver. 18, &c.

Gen. xlv. 1,
2, 3.

ver. 4. “Come, draw near; I am your brother

Joseph, who was sold to merchants coming into this country.” Then rejoiced they as if he had arisen from the dead: And Joseph, to

ver. 5. remove any remains of fear, embraced and kissed them, telling them to be of good cheer, that he absolutely forgot all that had passed, and that he would send them to their father with all kinds of necessaries for bringing the whole family into Egypt; adding, that God had sent him into Egypt for this very purpose, that he might be the happy instrument of preserving them in this time of distress. Accordingly he sent them away with waggons, servants, and provisions.

Pilgrim. This is, truly, a most affecting and edifying history. How was it, in the mean time, with the father, who had been left alone in such anxiety?

ver. 26. *Cleophas.* On hearing the surprizing news he would not believe it; for his son’s death was so rooted in his mind, that to talk of

ver. 27, 28. his being alive seemed to him phrenzy, or a contrivance to cover some fraudulent design: But when he saw the waggons and attendants,

Gen. xlv. 1. he cried out in an ecstasy, “If Joseph my son be yet alive, that is enough for me: I will hasten and see him before I die.” Immediately

the whole family, his sons, their wives and children, with servants, to the number of seventy souls, besides their cattle and goods, set out for Egypt; and Joseph,

ver. 29. not less desirous of seeing his father, went in his chariot, attended by a great number of courtiers and pages, to meet him. There is no need

of particularising the reciprocal demonstrations of joy at their meeting; and the land of Goshen, one of the best parts of Egypt, was assigned to Jacob and his

Gen. xlvii. 7, sons. The good patriarch was introduced
8, 9, 10. to Pharaoh, who kindly asked him about his age, manner of life, and other particulars.

After this audience he with great satisfaction retired

retired to his settlement, where he lived seventeen years longer, often ruminating on the past occurrences, and praising God, who is rich in mercy and wonderful in his ways; and, as the last token of his paternal affection, he on his death-bed blessed them all, beginning from Ephraim and Manasseh to the last of his sons, particularly Judah, with this glorious prophecy, "That he should sway the sceptre over his brethren, till the promised seed, or the Messiah, came." Thus it was that the children of Israel came into Egypt, as had been prophesied.

Pilgrim. This is a delightful story, indeed! But I cannot help being much affected with the thoughts of Egypt's distress during the five barren years, as certainly it must have been extremely deplorable.

Cleophas. Oh! no tongue can express it. Every part of that extensive country rung with lamentations, and scarce any thing but dismal objects were to be seen. The genial sun, which gladdens all creatures, was to them a grievance. The glittering stars, which are such an ornament to the sky, seemed, in their brightness, to fight against them. Dark clouds and showers, even storms and tempests, would have been more agreeable. Rain, at any rate, they wished for; but year came after year, without the least token of change. All the private stores being consumed, people first brought money to Joseph's grainaries for corn, then sold their herds and lands, and all trades were at a stand; and thus, the distress increasing, great numbers sold their children one after another: And what heart-rending, what crying, what agonies this must have occasioned, may well be imagined. The priests of Isis, and of all the other imaginary deities of Egypt, offered solemn sacrifices, and left none of their innumerable superstitions untried, for a favourable change of weather; but I leave you to judge of the effects of supplications to stocks and stones.

Pilgrim. But, after selling every thing, even to their children, which, to be sure, was a heart-rending distress, what farther resource had they to live?

Cleophas. Joseph, in his goodness, received them as the King's slaves, and maintained them during the dearth.

Pilgrim. The rich, then, were not reduced to such extremities as the poor.

Cleophas. At first they seemed to fare better, but gradually both came to be on a level; for, their money being gone, they sold their family estates, which nothing but famine could have prevailed on them to have done. They crawled about the streets pale and emaciated, with hollow eyes and sunk cheeks. Some, in a morning, were found dead in their beds; others, in bye places and corners. There is no expressing the dismal lamentations all over the whole country. At length, no means of support being left, and the grain-aries too well guarded to be attempted by open force, they flocked to the Ruler, begging on their knees, and with folded hands, "Oh! save us. Give us bread, and we will be Pharaoh's slaves, and serve him; only preserve our lives." Thus Joseph purchased all Egypt and the inhabitants, as the property of his Sovereign, who had raised him to that high station.

Pilgrim. These are wonderful things, indeed!

Cleophas. And no less wonderful would you hear, were I to relate all the circumstances, and other events which came to pass about that time, and to give you an account of that holy man Job in Idumæa, King Altades in Assyria, the giant Lestrigon in Italy, Hispalus the King of the Celtiberians, Apollo the inventor of physic; also of the building of several famous cities, as Memphis, Messana, Sparta, Rhodes, and others: But I must keep to my subject, lest, spending myself too much, I should not be able to go through with it.

Pilgrim. True; neither will I trouble you so much: Only, as you have been so kind as to relate the going
down

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down of the children of Israel into Egypt, I would fain know the occasion and manner of their leaving it.

Cleophas. Why, this was not till two hundred and fifty years after, in which time they suffered a great deal from the injustice and oppressions of the Egyptians; for Joseph dying within fifty six years, in the hundred and tenth year of his age, soon after a King ascended the throne of Egypt, who, seeing the vast increase of the Israelites, and that they manifestly surpassed the Egyptians in œconomy and industry of all kinds, apprehended that in case of a war they would side with the enemy, and take that opportunity of quitting the land. His counsellors applauding their monarch's forecast, he made slaves of the Israelites, and, forgetting the vast benefits which had accrued to the kingdom under Joseph's administration, put them to the most toilsome and fordid labours, particularly making of bricks for building strong, fenced cities for the King, and this under task-masters, who had orders to treat them with the utmost rigour; the sweat running down from every part of their bodies, the sun darting its beams on their heads, the parched earth burning their feet, and the overseers often scourging them out of mere wantonness. I leave you to think what sobbing and groaning there must have been.

Gen. 1.
22—26.

Exod. i. 8, &c.

Pilgrim. I dare say, they frequently thought on the liberty which their fathers enjoyed in the golden days of Joseph's time, when they lived in comfortable dwellings amidst their rich pastures, fields, and gardens, that the natives envied their prosperity.

Cleophas. There was no exemption; neither young nor old, weak nor strong, noble nor mean. No regard was had to birth, ingenuity, learning, or virtue. They were all indiscriminately used, as beasts born for labour.

Pilgrim. A sad reverse, indeed! It much affects me.

Cleophas. The Egyptian tyrant perceiving that, under all these distresses, their numbers still increased, and

being made acquainted with a prediction, that a Hebrew would soon be born to the great detriment of his kingdom, he ordered, as an effectual expedient for diminishing their numbers and defeating the prediction, that all the male children of the Hebrews

ver. 15, 16. should be put to death ; and all the Hebrew midwives, being summoned, were charged to put the same in execution at the time of delivery.

Pilgrim. Such barbarity I never heard of.

Cleophas. There was woeful lamentation among the women. Conception, which before they accounted a blessing, was now dreaded ; and instead of the birth, especially of a male child, alleviating the pains of labour, now it was heart-piercing tidings to hear that the infant was a male. There was nothing but weeping and wailing among the Hebrew wives ; and some could not refrain from imprecations against the King and his ministers.

Pilgrim. It seems strange, that God should bear with such ill treatment of his people.

Cleophas. Never take upon you to censure the ways of Heaven. There are, perhaps, two reasons why God sometimes suffers his people to be under the lash of tyrants : First, for the trial of their zeal and fidelity ; secondly, to catch the tyrants in their own supposed prudence, and to prove that they cannot go beyond the bounds he hath set them. Accordingly this Pharaoh, (for so were styled all the ancient Kings of Egypt,) fell a victim to his persecuting schemes, the divine providence being too strong for all his devices, backed by absolute power.

Pilgrim. How was that brought to pass ?

Cleophas. God influenced the hearts of the midwives, that they eluded the royal mandate, and ordered things so, that Amenophis (the tyrant's proper name) himself brought up the very person whom he chiefly intended to destroy.

Pilgrim.

Pilgrim. Wonderful! Happy they, who are under the divine care.

Cleophas. A Hebrew woman, of the house of Levi, had found means to conceal her child three months; when, fearing for his safety, she put him in an ark of bulrushes done over with pitch, and laid it among the flags at the river's brink, the child's sister standing at a distance to see the issue. The King's daughter, coming to wash herself, and seeing the ark floating, ordered one of her attendants to bring it to her. The child being very beautiful, she took it home, and, calling him Moses, from his being taken out of the water, brought him up as her own son; thus he became versed in all the sciences then known in Egypt, besides some secrets or mysteries received by divine inspiration: And this proved the very man who headed the Israelites in their departure out of Egypt, when a sad disaster befell both King and people; and this, even in his tender years, was intimated by an odd presage; for, sitting one day on Pharaoh's knee, and the King, to please his daughter, putting his crown on Moses's head, he threw it on the floor, and sliding down, trod on it several times. Though this did not pass without animadversion, yet the daughter, excusing it as no more than a childish freak, Moses was continued at court; which, according to the prediction, proved a heavy stroke to the nation, though not till many years after the time of Amenophis.

Exod. ii.
1, &c.

Pilgrim. Then, I suppose, that interval affords some remarkable incidents.

Cleophas. Yes, indeed: For Amenophis, after a reign of thirty two years, was succeeded by Orus, who filled the throne thirty eight years. In his time Moses, growing up to manhood, became universally esteemed for his literature and behaviour. Being in his fortieth year, he was extremely affected with the sufferings of his brethren, and felt an ardent resolution to deliver them. Accordingly, foregoing the title of an Egyptian

tian prince, entertainments, equipages, magnificent attire, and all the other glories and pleasures of a court, he, with a heroism equal, or rather superior, to those feats immortalized by statues among the idolatrous nations, withdrew, and shared in the contumely and hardships of his kindred. According to the ideas of the world, it was certainly highly scandalous at once to throw aside every honourable distinction, and wander about the country as a despised vagrant. But this he made light of; for, with the realizing eye of faith, he looked to him who is invisible. It was with him as if he had actually seen him. But, what is rather more wonderful, after forsaking so much for his brethren, they despised him, and used him
 ver, 15, &c. ill, and would have informed against him

for killing an Egyptian, though in defence of an Israelite; that he was obliged to seek safety in the wilderness, till he came to a priest in Midian, who gave him one of his daughters in marriage for having defended them against the rudeness of some shepherds: And Moses lived with his father-in-law as a shepherd. Instead of contrasting the meanness and hardships of his present state with the grandeur and enjoyments of the former, I shall only observe, that the hope and view of his glorious self-denial seemed now totally vanished: In all appearance, the length of his solitary exile left him nothing to expect in this world. You must think that, before the expiration of forty years, he must have given over all his schemes of deliverance, and concluded himself relinquished by his God, had not he intensely looked forward to things eternal: A true image of the great Shepherd, who appeared in after-times.

Pilgrim. I admire the good man's firmness under such discouraging circumstances. But what happened afterwards?

Cleophas. On the demise of Orus the crown devolved to Acengeres, who, after a reign of twelve years, left it to Achorus, who enjoyed it twelve years. About
 this

this time Egypt produced a very wise man, named Hermes Trismegistus, from whom the city of Hermopolis, in that country, derives its name. Among other sciences in which he was eminent, he predicted, with great depth and perspicuity, that the Word of God should appear in a human form; and, in the sequel of our discourse, we shall see that it came to pass. Oh! the unsearchable riches of the wisdom and goodness of God! I could tell you of Belgius the King of the Celts, of the building of Athens, that famous Grecian seminary of literature, and many other things and persons; but we will rather confine ourselves to such as are more immediately connected with our subject, and of more interesting instruction.

Pilgrim. Very right, Father; and I shall be all attention.

Cleophas. The above-mentioned Achorus was succeeded by Pharaoh Chencres, King of Egypt, in whose time a very singular inundation happened in Thessaly, in Greece, Deucalion being then King of that country. But in the fifteenth year of the reign of Chencres, as he continued to oppress the Israelites, and the time which God had foretold to Abraham, namely four hundred and thirty years, being elapsed, as Moses was tending his sheep, God appeared to him in a flame out of a bush, ordering him to go and represent to Pharaoh Chencres, that he should ease the Israelites of their unjust burthens, and set them at liberty, that they might go and serve their God in the wilderness; but that Chencres would not hear of: And Moses proving, by many miracles, the truth of his mission, the King convened all his wise men and magicians. These also performed many signs and wonders, and opposed Moses and his brother Aaron, that the King sent them away with contempt, and oppressed the Israelites more than before; for now, instead of being supplied with straw, they

E
Exod. iii.
and iv.

Exod. vii.
9-12.

Exod. v
6-18.

were

were obliged to go into the fields themselves and gather it in the night, to have it ready for next day's work. This pressure set them a murmuring against Moses, and they threatened him as the author of all their sufferings.

Pilgrim. This was a hard trial.

Cleophas. At length God smote Egypt with ten plagues successively, that the land was destroyed, their cattle perished, their water corrupted; the tables, ovens, and pantries swarmed with slimy frogs; their seats, parks, and gardens, in which they took so much pleasure, were involved in impenetrable darkness, that there they sat, or were obliged to feel their way. But, what was still worse, there was not a house without a corpse or two in it. The streets rang with the lamentations of people, crying, "Oh! my son, my only son, died last night! My eldest son is dead. Last night I lost the only heir of my family." And in the King's palace there was the like dismal scene; for the hereditary prince lay at his last gasp, and all the lords and gentlemen of the court were mourning their expiring sons in their apartments. This occasioned a general supplication, with the most affecting outcries, that the

Exod. xli.
37, 38.

King would let Israel depart, or they should all perish by one plague or another.

Then the Israelites assembled together from their towns and villages, to the number of six hundred thousand men, exclusive of women and children, besides a multitude of the commonalty, who were inclined to share their fate. On the eve of their departure, they for the first time, by divine direction, celebrated the eating of the Paschal Lamb, in commemoration not only of their deliverance, but of that Lamb without blemish, that Lamb of God which taketh away the sins of the world, and killed within my time.

Pilgrim. What a treasure of knowledge have you stored up in your memory!

Cleophas.

Cleophas. They departed with gladness of heart, some carrying utensils and furniture, some driving their cattle, some leading camels and asses laden with necessaries for the camp ; others carried things of considerable value, gold, silver, and rich apparel, which God had directed them to borrow of their ungrateful oppressors. The women carried the dough which remained of the Paschal Supper ; the suddenness of their departure not allowing them time to bake it. They had marched some days, and drew near to the Red Sea, when they saw a vast host of armed men, with horses and chariots, that they covered all the hills, eagerly pursuing them ; and at the head of them was the King himself. At this the Israelites, all terrified, cried out, " Oh, that we had staid in Egypt !" The women wrung their hands and tore their hair, and the men exclaimed against Moses ; but he serenely comforted them with the assurance of God's help, who was already come down in a columnar cloud, to protect his people from the assaults of Pharaoh. As the host was now at the heels of the Israelites, and all they saw before them was a wide, deep sea, they gave themselves over for lost ; when God said to Moses, " Stretch thy rod over the sea, and it shall divide." Accordingly the waters opened a passage, and stood in a heap on each side. Then Moses, leading the way, all the people followed him, and safely reached the opposite shore.

Exod. xiv.
1-9.

ver. 10, 11,
12.

ver. 13, 14.

ver. 15-21.

ver. 22.

Pilgrim. Such a passage, I believe, was never heard of. But how did Chencres proceed ?

Cleophas. Not imagining but that this passage was also clear to him, he continued his pursuit ; but, when they were in the middle, the Lord caused the waters to close on all sides, that Chencres, and all his host, to the number of fifty thousand, perished : A signal document, that all human strength
and

ver. 23-28.

and power are of no avail against those whom the Most High protects.

Pilgrim. What a glorious deliverance!

Cleophas. Now the Israelites stood on the land, with instruments of music, praising the Lord, who had given them to see the destruction of those enemies, whose tyranny they had so severely felt. Here came rolling horses, men, harnesses, bridles, wheels, and chariots: The strand was covered with apparel, flags, streamers, bows, arrows, and engines of war, with carcases innumerable.

Pilgrim. What terrors and lamentations such a catastrophe must have raised in Egypt?

Cleophas. Not only in Egypt, but it made a great noise in other countries also. At that time, over the Assyrians reigned Ascadatas. Among the Greeks, Cecrops and Eristonus distinguished themselves, by building the famous temple of Apollo at Delphos. Also, about thirty years after, Dardanus founded the city of Troy, and erected it into a kingdom. In Egypt, after this Chencres, Acheres came to be King; and he was succeeded by Cherres; on whose demise Danaus obtained the royalty: But none of these Kings ever offered to prosecute hostilities against Israel.

Pilgrim. Pray let me hear how that people proceeded in their way to the promised land?

Cleophas. Oh, Son, many wonderful things happened to them; for it was not till after innumerable trials, that they saw themselves fairly settled there: But to give you the particulars would quite exhaust me.

Pilgrim. I beg you would at least give me such a sketch, as your decayed strength will allow of.

Cleophas. Do you see yonder, directly South, a blueish mountain?

Pilgrim. Yes, just at the edge of the horizon.

Cleophas. There begins a wilderness, which reaches all the way to Egypt, a parched sandy waste, utterly barren, and scarce affording any water. This was the
first

first part of the Israelites march, and here they soon were reduced to extreme distress : But at Moses's prayer, so prevailing is the prayer of a good man, they were miraculously relieved ; waters, which, by reason of their bitterness, could not be drank, being made sweet, by Moses causing a tree, shewn him by God, to be cast into the pond. Another time, when they were all perishing for thirst and heat, children crying to their mothers who looked piteously on them ; the poor beasts, languishing under the excessive sultriness, stood snuffing up the air, and expressing their pain in melancholy lowings ; here again the divine mercy interposed. Moses was directed to strike a rock, and out gushed a large stream of water, which plentifully supplied all their wants : The mothers, enraptured, gave it to their pining children, and the cattle ran to its dispersed currents. Once, in a want of bread, and apparently without any resource, they raised a violent murmur against Moses ; but, on his supplication, God rained a round, white grain, in such abundance, that every one throughout the whole camp gathered a plentiful sufficiency for his family : and it was of such a compound taste, as to supply the want of eggs, flesh, vegetables, and spices. There was no need of laying it up in grainaries, for every morning it lay before their doors, except on the Sabbath ; accordingly, on the sixth day, they gathered for two days : And this nutritive and palatable grain never failed them, during the whole forty years that they wandered in the wilderness.

Exod. xv.
22-25.Exod. xvii.
4-7.

Exod. xvi.

Pilgrim. How ! Forty years ! Was the country, then, so far off ?

Cleophas. It was not at all owing to the distance : But they had not the spirit to trust in the Invisible, after so many miracles wrought in their behalf, and were afraid to march into the country, the inhabitants being men of large stature and fierce countenances, and their

their weapons proportioned to their bodies, that the Israelites made but a discouraging figure in comparison of them. Besides, the country was in itself strong and

mountainous, and had many fenced cities.
 Numb. xiii. Of these particulars they were informed
 and xiv.

by spies, who had taken a view of the country, and brought away samples of its products, as grapes, figs, olives, wheat, and barley; but the account, which the spies gave of the inhabitants, threw the Israelites into all their former agonies. Mothers wept over their children: "Oh! Was ever misery like ours? We must either perish in this wilderness, or be killed by the Canaanites. Oh! that we had staid in Egypt! Why did we believe this Moses? What signifies a land flowing with milk and honey, if its people are to kill us?" The children answered the lamentations of their mothers with dismal screams and howlings. Of the men, some sat trembling; others ran about, as if mad; and some were so audacious as to gather up stones, and cast them at Moses and Aaron: They even talked of choosing another leader, and returning into Egypt. Thus none were found who would go up into the land of Canaan; which want of confidence displeased God, and he decreed they should wander forty years in the wilderness, and all, from twenty years and upwards, die in the way, two only excepted, who had opposed those murmurs, and exhorted the people to go and face the enemy, having God's promises on their side.

Pilgrim. I perceive, that God requires impossibilities to be believed, that his works may be the more magnified.

Cleophas. True: But there is no such thing as impossibility with God.

Pilgrim. In such a space of time, it is very probable, some remarkable things must have happened to them.

Cleophas. Oh! there is no telling all their great changes. Sometimes they were sinking into despair, then as elate with joy: This week all things went to
 their

A.M. 2470. *a* PILGRIM *and* CLEOPHAS. LII

their wish ; the next, they found themselves in great difficulties. Their devotion was as unstable as their outward condition ; for Moses

Exod. xix, xx.

being gone up a mountain, to receive from God, laws and ordinances, they unanimously promised to conform to them, and expressed great joy that the will of God was to be made more particularly known

Exod. xxxii.
1, &c.

to them ; but, within a month or so, they had made a golden calf, to represent the ox Apis, worshiped by the Egyptians, and paid it divine honours, also dancing about it with all kinds of musical instruments : At which Moses indeed was, on his return, so irritated, that he demolished the idol. Many such things fell out. Sometimes they committed whoredom with strange nations. They grew tired of the delicious manna, and nothing would serve them but flesh ; and more than once repeated their insults against Moses. No, they would not be lorded over any longer by such an one as he ; and a thousand the like caprices.

Pilgrim. But what was the issue ?

Cleophas. Sometimes God humoured them in their desires. When, longing for flesh, they saw, as it were, thick clouds driven from the coast of Arabia across the sea ; but, near at hand, it proved living quails, which fell round about the camp, a day's journey in length, and two cubits high. Now the people were mad with joy, and fell to plucking, cooking, and feasting. But, alas ! there was soon a sad alteration ; for, whilst the flesh was yet between their teeth, they dropped down, and died loathsomely by thousands.

Num. xi.
4, &c.

Pilgrim. So they paid dearly for their discontent and sensuality.

Cleophas. Aye, indeed : As they were perpetually provoking God, he punished them with some dreadful plagues. He sent fire from heaven, whereby great numbers were consumed to ashes. Another time, fiery
serpents

serpents came among them, whose bite was extremely torturing and deadly, and many were killed by them, till, at Moses's intercession, God directed him to make a brazen serpent and set it upon a pole, and, only by looking at it, they who had been bitten were instantly healed. But, what was still more terrible, the earth

opened all in a flame, and swallowed up whole families, and those some of the most eminent, for setting themselves in competition with Moses and Aaron, and endeavouring to raise a mutiny against them; all the people flying in the utmost consternation, and screaming as if the earth was opening under them also.

Pilgrim. Terrible, indeed; yet, to be sure, not beyond their demerits. How miserable is the state of man?

Cleophas. That is a very disputable point: But it is evident that God has given them strong consolations, foretelling by Moses the coming of his principal Prophet, who was also typified by the brazen

serpent, before mentioned, healing the venomous bites; by a staff, which, in one night, blossomed and bore almonds; by several parts of the pontifical robe, and other things, representing the grace, love, power, and glory of this future Prophet and King, who—Oh Son!

Pilgrim. Now your trouble returns on you; but, I pray, do not break off. The Israelites surely made very ill returns for all God's wonderful kindnesses.

Cleophas. Oh, Son, what a shame! The nations shewed a greater sense of benefits than the people of Israel: For Bacchus, about this time, having planted a vineyard in Greece, was honoured with a yearly festival. So Dardanus the first Trojan King, Erichomus, Perseus, Cadmus, Amphion, Minos, and others, have been constantly revered among those nations whom they advantaged. How very different Israel, at every turn forgetful of the almighty God, and even apostatizing from his pure worship!

Pilgrim.

A.M. 2494. a PILGRIM and CLEOPHAS. 113

Pilgrim. Father, be pleased to inform me, by what means this timorous and ungrateful people came to possess the land of Canaan.

Cleophas. After all these miracles, all the males of the former murmuring generation being extinct, God, in order to execute his promise, substituted in his stead Joshua the son of Nun, a devout and brave man; and Moses, after God had given him a view of the Land of Promise from Mount Pisgah, died in his hundred and twentieth year, of which I want but little, though very unequal to him in other respects; for his senility had little impaired either his strength, senses, or faculties, which is more than I can say. Now Joshua, with all the host of Israel, having crossed the river Jordan, in a manner not less miraculous than Moses's passage through the Red Sea, the whole country was in the utmost consternation; the hearts of the Kings melted within them; the gates of the towns were shut; it put a total stop to all trades, and the country people forsook their habitations; they judged that all resistance must fall before him, whose invasion had been facilitated by such a miracle; and what made their case worse, there was no coming to terms with him; he was to extirpate them, or drive them out without listening to any accommodation.

Num. xxvii.
18, &c.

Deut. xxxiv.

Josh. iii, iv.

Pilgrim. What was the event?

Cleophas. Do you observe, yonder, a good way off, towards the north east, a fragment of a very high tower?

Pilgrim. I see it.

Cleophas. That was the first place of which Joshua made himself master, and then called Jericho, a beautiful pleasant city, but on being taken was burnt, and when rebuilt some hundred years after, was destroyed about fifty years ago, in the

Josh. vi.

last war. Joshua proceeded in a course of success, taking cities and defeating armies; at that time this

city where we are was under King Adonisedeck, who, on information that Gi-

Josh. x. beon (which stood on that mountain towards the north) had sued for peace, being joined by four other Kings, assaulted it; but Joshua, coming to its assistance, took the allied Kings prisoners, and caused them to be hanged. Twenty-six other Kings he also subdued; but all these things were not done without great miracles; for the walls of Jericho fell down at the sound of trumpets; the sun and moon once stood still in the firmament, assisting Joshua in the pursuit of the enemy, that they who lived far westward wondered at the unusual length of their morning, whilst the Orientals were no less amazed at their evening. It was the talk every where, as what had never been seen; but

Josh. xiii. &c. Joshua and his men only knew the cause.

This victorious chief having reduced the whole country, except a few strong cities, of which this was one, he divided it, by lot, among the twelve tribes of Israel, assigning to each its inheritance; and thus was fulfilled the promise to Abraham and his seed.

Pilgrim. So the people of Israel, at length, saw an end of their troubles.

Cleophas. Not at all; the remainder of the Canaanites, whom they had neglected to drive out, in Judg. i and ii. consideration of a tribute, proved very troublesome to them; besides, after the death of Joshua, they adopted the heathenish customs, and intermarried with them, served their idols, and committed a thousand other abominations.

Pilgrim. That was terrible, indeed; but how could they fall into such impieties?

Cleophas. Men easily decline from invisible to visible and present good. There had been formerly an Assyrian King, Jupiter Belus, whose reign being remarkably

remarkably prosperous and happy to his people, after his death a statue was erected in honour of him, and one of the brightest stars in the firmament called Jupiter from him; Greece also had a very famous and wise King of the same name, with his two brothers Pluto and Neptune; these dying were deified, but chiefly Jupiter (whom the Assyrians termed Bel) was greatly honoured in Canaan by the name of Bel, i. e. the supreme Lord. They also worshiped Venus, the goddess of Love, the Ashtaroth of the Sidonians, and gave her name to the evening star, as of distinguished beauty; the star Remphan was consecrated to Saturn, and divine honours paid to it.

Pilgrim. Now I recollect, Noah told me of some commencements of idolatry, and particularly of Jupiter Belus, to whom images had begun to be erected, and from which, he then apprehended bad consequences; and I perceive his fears were too well grounded; but to me it is surprizing, that after so many miracles, which carried the most forcible conviction that their God was the true God, the Israelites should apostatize and embrace idolatry.

Cleophas. Your surprize would be abated, were you better acquainted with the human mind. The laws given by God through Moses, imposed a strict restraint on the senses and appetites; whereas idolatry gave a large range to licentiousness, and, in many cases, sanctified the most abandoned debauchery. Then their altars, or places for solemn sacrifices, were commonly in groves of high and branchy trees, ringing with the melody of birds; or on heights, finely planted, in a clear air; all which disposed the senses in its favour. Then their rites were not less ensnaring, being accompanied with drums, trumpets, lutes, harps, dances, songs, and all which the mistaken world calls merriment; not to mention the revels and excesses of their festivals, when they ran riot into the most shameful enormities. These were

powerful seducements ; and accordingly they debauched the people of Israel from the God of Holiness : And, oh ! that, in these wretched times, the people might not be said to serve Baal and Ashtaroth in their tempers and pursuits !

Pilgrim. Herein you have satisfied me. But how did matters go with Israel ? The apostacy, I would hope, was not general.

Cleophas. The Lord punished them by the heathens, who enslaved them, and, by their hard usage, made their lives bitter ; but, on their calling on him, he sent them a deliverer, who rescued them from their enemies, and governed them wisely, according to Moses's wholesome polity. For the space of four hundred years they were governed by twelve Judges successively, who had great wars with the heathens, and reduced them. This city, among others, was taken from the Jebusites, and burnt and razed, except that part which stood on this

Judg. iii. 4,
6, 7, 11, 13,
14, 15, 16.

mountain, and was strongly fortified. Othniel drove the Rephaim, or giants, from Hebron ; Ehud subdued the Moabites ; Barak the Canaanites ; Gideon the Midianites ; Jephtha the Ammonites ; Samson the Philistines. Thus was Israel frequently helped out of its trouble ; and a light always remained among them ; so far as to preserve the Law, the Promise, and the purity of worship. But to relate at large the achievements of these Judges, and the miracles of their times, how by only an alarm they destroyed the enemy, how they overcame lions, forced the gates of their enemies, with a small force defeated large armies, time would fail me ; for none of the heroes, who signalized themselves at the siege of Troy, would bear a comparison with these Judges. After-

1 Sam. iv.

wards, the government was lodged in the hands of the high priest Heli ; which proved a very dangerous juncture : For the Philistines, who possessed all the fine country along the sea-coasts, and

and were in alliance with the Phœnicians, to whom belonged the cities of Tyre and Sidon, so famous for their commerce, greatly annoyed the Israelites, making inroads into their borders and pillaging the people. But what struck Israel with the greatest terror, was the ark of God being taken by those invaders, and carried in triumph to the temple of their idol Dagon. However, the next day this idol was found fallen from its pedestal, with its head and hands off; likewise the men were afflicted with hæmorrhoidal pains, that they were glad to send the ark back again. The Israelites continued exposed to the violences of the Philistines, till Samuel, a prophet of God, told them, that if they would put away Baalim and Ashtaroth, and serve the Lord, he would deliver them from the Philistines; which they did: And the Philistines coming to attack them, God destroyed them by lightnings, that they fled before Israel. Samuel's sons having little of their father's virtue, the heads of the people made a formal request to him for a King, as all the other nations had. He reasoned with them; but a King they would have. Hereupon Saul, a person of an extraordinary stature, was, by divine appointment, anointed first King of Israel, about four hundred and fifty years after their coming out of Egypt, Dercillus being King of Assyria, and Codrus of Athens; and a hundred years after the destruction of Troy, and the foundation of the kingdom of the Latins in Italy by Æneas, which was a little later than those of Lacedæmon and Corinth.

Pilgrim. Did not Israel make a great figure under their new government?

Cleophas. No; for though the King commanded respect, and obtained some advantages over the Heathens, he did not settle the Israelites in absolute tranquillity: Then, not being in possession of this, the

chosen and royal city, he kept his court, such as it was, at Gibeon, then a splendid city, but it now lies in ruins. Besides, instead of continuing in

1 Sam. xv. the obedience due to God, his heart was lifted up; for which the Lord rejected him. But the man elect, the shepherd—

Pilgrim. What means that heavy sigh, Father?

Cleophas. That shepherd of Israel, of the line of Judah, to whom the sceptre belonged, an exact type of the true anointed.

Pilgrim. Your heart seems labouring with some deep and weighty thoughts.

Cleophas. I scarce know of which shepherd to speak. My thoughts are taken up with two. Yet, to follow historical order, and the better assist your understanding, I shall begin with the type.

Pilgrim. And I shall carefully listen; for I am more and more pleased with your conversation.

Cleophas. The shepherd abovementioned
1 Sam. xvi. was named David, a very comely youth, of an amiable behaviour, and religiously disposed; yet made little account of in his father's house. This youth, in preference to all his brothers, Samuel, by

God's appointment, anointed King of
1 Sam. xvii. Israel; and having, animated by reliance on God, overcome and killed a Philistine champion, who had challenged the army of the Israelites, the people idolized him to such a degree, that they would have made him King: But he then declined that dignity; and it was not till after a long course of distress and

hardships that he was advanced to it, Saul
2 Sam. xxxi. having been slain in a battle against the
1 Sam. ii. Philistines. David chose Hebron for his

first residence; but, in the seventh year of his reign, when all Israel had submitted to him, he came and laid siege to this city, then called Jebus. The inhabitants, confiding in its strong walls and works, set him at defiance. On this hill of Sion stood a castle esteemed impreg-

impregnable; and somewhat lower on that hill, called Akra, were the suburbs; of which David's troops having made themselves masters, they carried the fortress by storm. He caused the city to be rebuilt in a splendid manner, with a stately palace for himself on this hill; and in process of time Jerusalem, for so it was now called, being the residence of the Kings of Judah, became considerably enlarged, and famed in all countries.

Pilgrim. But what noble ruins are those yonder eastward; for the many angles of walls, blue and white hewn stones and marble pillars, many streaked with gold, amidst all the weeds and moss, with which some are overrun, plainly shew them to be remains of very grand buildings.

Cleophas. I could wish you had kept this observation to yourself; for it pierces me to the very heart. Would I had never beheld that structure; then its present condition would give me less pain. You might, at the same time, ask me, Whence those heaps of hewn freestone, some triangular, some square, some semicircular, some with festoons and other decorations? Whole streets lie there; that to give you an account of every particular, I should want the written history of its catastrophe: Yet, being met for that purpose, your question is not out of point, though premature, as we are now only at the infancy of the city; since which it has gone through many vicissitudes, before the last demolition and the subsequent rebuilding, if it may be called such.

Pilgrim. Father, you will kindly impute any abrupt questions I may ask, to my want of knowing better. Now, if you please, reassume your narrative of King David.

Cleophas. This King, besides embellishing the city with many sumptuous edifices, subduing the Heathens on all sides, and regulating the priestly worship, composed very fine hymns, in which he prophetically

makes mention of an everlasting kingdom to be erected in Judea and his lineage; God herein renewing the promise made to Abraham about nine hundred years before, That in his seed all the nations of the earth should be blessed. After a reign of forty years, for the most part glorious, but clouded with some domestic afflictions by the violent passions of his sons, this King was gathered to his fathers, and interred on this same hill where you see yon ruins.

Pilgrim. Who was his successor?

Cleophas. A son of his, and a prince who never had his equal for wisdom.

Pilgrim. What was his name?

Cleophas. Solomon; a name, indeed, very suitable to his disposition; for his long reign of forty years was one continued peace, both abroad and at home: And never before, nor since, did the kingdom of Israel enjoy such prosperity, or make such a figure; for he was respected by all potentates for his wisdom. There was no riddle nor abstruse question, which he could not solve. He was perfectly acquainted with the nature of all vegetables, gems, metals, and other fossils; of beasts, reptiles, birds, and insects; with the motions and orbits of the sun, moon, and stars. His buildings and gardens were the wonder of the world. The œconomy and lustre of his court, his table, and apparel, no tongue can set forth. Intricate processes he at once decided by his admirable sagacity. In a word, he was an ornament

*1 Kings v, vi,
vii, viii.*

to Israel; and, as for Jerusalem in particular, he made it the glory of the earth, the sanctuary of holiness; erecting there, on that mount Moriah, where you see those venerable ruins, (it troubles me to think of it) a temple, which, for richness of materials and grandeur of its architecture, besides the furniture and utensils, surpassed any thing on earth. Eighty thousand artificers were employed

ployed on it seven whole years; but the Holy of Holies, in which were placed the altar of incense and the ark of the covenant, was of a magnificence beyond all conception. Jerusalem also was appointed the only place for solemn sacrifices, and the celebration of the more solemn feasts. Think, my Son, what must have been the happiness of a place, which God had chosen for his name, and where such a prince sat on the throne. He also built a house for himself and his queen, which took up thirteen years. His throne for solemn occasions was of ivory and gold; round it stood his princes and great men; whilst Kings and Queens, hearing of his fame, came from remote countries, to see his magnificence, and hear his wisdom. Every year brought into his treasury six hundred and sixty six talents of gold, besides merchandize to an immense amount: As for silver, it was accounted nothing of in the days of Solomon. In knowledge he far surpassed the Chaldæans, Egyptians, Æthiopians, Tyrians, and other celebrated nations; and for wisdom, no man could come in competition with him. Oh, how Jerusalem flourished then! Three times annually all the people of Israel were, by the Mosaic Law, to repair thither; and those, who made their appearance, may very fairly be computed at some hundreds of thousands. The shopkeepers, artificers, merchants, men of letters, nobles, princes, scribes and priests, which once lived within these ruins here; the pompous edifices, the fine gardens, the pleasant walks, which adorned this city; and now, alas! alas! what is it; a confused pile of fragments, a ruinous abomination, a dwelling of oppression. *How is the gold become dim, how is the fine gold changed!*

1 Kings i.

1 Kings x.

Lament. iv. 1.

Pilgrim. Father, without giving way to such untimely grief, proceed in your account of the Kingdom of Israel.

Cleophas,

Cleophas. That prosperous monarch was succeeded by his son, but so very unlike him, that
1 Kings xi. 43. his folly and perverseness did more mischief than his father's incomparable wisdom had done good.

Pilgrim. That was sad indeed!

Cleophas. The kingdom, which under the three preceding Princes had continued united and entire, now became rent into two parts; the two
1 Kings xii. 2—24. tribes of Judah and Benjamin, together with Jerusalem, the capital, adhered to the one, who was called Rehoboam, and formed the kingdom of Judah; whilst the other ten tribes declared for Jeroboam, as their King. Yet this division of the kingdom was but a slight evil in comparison of that consequent to it, by which, at length, the Kingdom and glory of Israel were quite ruined and laid in the dust.

Pilgrim. Oh! what a pity; but pray what was that dreadful evil?

Cleophas. I will relate it, though, I assure you, it gives me a sensible grief. Jeroboam, fearing a defection of the people, as they were bound every year to present themselves at his enemy's capital, Jeru-
ver. 26—33. salem, (his being the town of Samaria,) invented a false worship, and set up two golden calves, within his own dominions; knowing how easily, by such images, Israel had been seduced in the wilderness to a disregard of the true worship; and his artifice succeeded but too well, for we are told, that the people flocked in great numbers to offer sacrifices of all kinds to these idols.

Pilgrim. Strange stupidity!

Cleophas. To salve the matter, he gave out, that his intention was far from any thing of idolatry, but that it was done in honour of the God, who had brought Israel out of Egypt: That God was not confined to place, and might be worshiped as well before the Calves at Bethel, as in the Temple of Jerusalem.

Pilgrim.

Pilgrim. Here was something, indeed, of a plausible appearance.

Cleophas. This plausibility was necessary to the deceit, else how could the people have been seduced? Now in this idolatry, walked his successors, Nadab, Baesa, Ella, Zimri, Amri and Ahab, not only hardening Israel in its impiety, but they had even begun to introduce the worship of Baal Jupiter. Then it pleased God, for the conversion of this unhappy people, to send the Prophet Elijah with signs and wonders. At his word the heavens were shut up, that there was no rain nor dew for three years; this he had the courage to declare to the cruel Ahab himself; and I leave you to think what misery both man and beast must have suffered in such a drought; as for the Prophet, a widow, in extreme distress, receiving him kindly, he assured her what little meal and oil she had, should not fail till rain came upon the earth; and he staid with her some time. At length the Lord pitied his sheep, straying under false shepherds. You see yonder, directly north, a fine fertile mountain; it is called Carmel, and stands not far from the sea. On this mountain, Elijah desired the King to assemble the Priests of Baal, in the presence of all Israel, and he proved the Lord to be the only God, by commanding fire from Heaven to consume his sacrifice; which the priests of Baal had not been able to do with all their ceremonies and incantations; upon which they were put to death, as impostors: The people hereupon renouncing their errors, God, at the request of Elijah, sent rain, and the succession of seasons, that the earth soon recovered all its beauty and fertility. After such evidences of supernatural power, this eminent Prophet suffered a great deal by the persecutions of Ahab, till after a sojournment on earth, signalized by many miracles, he was taken up to heaven in a fiery chariot, leaving

1 Kings xvii.
1.

1 Kings xviii.
19---39.

2 Chron. ii.

ing behind him his disciple Elisha, who seventy years fed the flock of Israel with a care truly pastoral, performed many signs and wonders, raised the 2 Kings iii. 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9. dead, cleansed lepers, fed the hungry by miracles, helped the distressed, instructed the ignorant, and foretold of things to come. He outlived six Kings of Israel, Ahab, Ahaziah, Joram, Jehu, Jehoash and Joash, who all reigned 2 Kings xliii. 14-20. successively, and his death was lamented by all the people, as certainly he had been a great comfort to them in such calamitous and distracted times.

Pilgrim. These are surprizing things, indeed! But did then this dismembered Kingdom of Israel so amend as totally to relinquish idolatry, and unite itself to the throne of David? for you say that they were reformed by Elijah's miracles.

Cleophas. How should it amend? The commonalty were not their own masters. Though sometimes they conformed to the admonitions of Prophets, as Hosea, Amos, Joel, Abdias, and others, who were continually preaching to them, yet the impious Kings, and men in power, compelled them to profess idolatry.

Pilgrim. I perceive, then, that its Kings were all wicked.

Cleophas. Yes, from the first to the last; for after the abovenamed Joash, who reigned in Elisha's time, rose up Jeroboam, the second of the name, and no better than the first. After him the land fell under several tyrants, destroying each other like wild beasts; and more hurtful to society than the worst of them, is the man who has thrown off religion and virtue; Zachariah was murdered, by Sallum; whose brutality was such, that on taking a place which had made any resistance, besides putting all the men and children to the sword, the pregnant women were

were ripped up; but all his family were cut off by Pekah, as he by Hoseah; till at length God put a period to all these abominations, together with the Kingdom, by Salmanasser King of Assyria, a very potent Prince; his grandfather, Phul Belochus having, about seventy years before, dispossessed Sardanapalus of his empire. Thus ended the Kingdom of the ten tribes of Israel, after a term of two hundred and fifty three years, and they were carried away captive into a very remote country; a calamity which they could not but see was a chastisement of their impieties.

Pilgrim. What a change!

Cleophas. A similar change happened, about this time, in Italy; Amulius, the fifteenth King of the Latins, being murdered by Romulus and Remus, his grand-children, who built the renowned city of Rome, the present capital of the whole universe, and residence of the mighty and invincible emperor Trajan, whose predecessors —

Pilgrim. Now, Father, a fresh fit of grief comes on you.

Cleophas. What melancholy events croud thick on me from all sides!

Pilgrim. You were speaking of Trajan, an Emperor.

Cleophas. His predecessors, I say, caused frequent and horrid effusion of blood; and his hands are not quite clean, though celebrated for clemency. But why do I dwell on him, having such a wide field before me? I might also relate to you, how the Greeks, about this time, began to compute their time by Olympiads; also of the foundation of the kingdom of Macedonia. But what signify pagan histories? My own city of Jerusalem, and its various revolutions, will afford me matter enough. I have quite digressed from the point. I should have gone on with the account of that city, and, at the same time, of the tribe of Judah.

Pilgrim.

Pilgrim. Right, Father; and that is what I very much long to hear.

Cleophas. Have not I already said, that Rehoboam, the son of Solomon, on his father's death reigned at Jerusalem?

Pilgrim. Yes, Father.

Cleophas. He forsook God, and, as is
2Chron. xii.

too usual, high and low followed his wicked example. But the Lord visited their impiety; for behold Sishak, King of Egypt, came up with an innumerable army, particularly twelve hundred chariots with two and four horses abreast, according to a manner of fighting long used among the ancients. After ravaging the country and mastering the fenced cities, he sat down before Jerusalem. Then the heart of the King and the great men melted within them, and they humbled themselves before the Lord; who, being abundant in mercy, instead of utterly destroying them, permitted them only to be deprived of those riches which they made their boast of. But it is impossible to express the dejection and anguish of all ranks, at seeing the sacred treasures of the temple, its costly utensils, and Solomon's golden shields, and many other things of great value, carried away by the strange people. Then saw they, that wisdom excelleth folly, as light darkness; and thought
Ecclesiast. ii.
18-21.

on Solomon's grief, at foreseeing all the works of his hands, all done in such wisdom, must fall into those hands which had done nothing towards them. Rehoboam, after a
2Chron. xiii.

reign of seventeen years, was succeeded by his son Abijah, who reigned only three years. He
2Chron. xiv.

defeated Jeroboam, in one of the greatest battles, perhaps, which history records. His own army consisted of four hundred thousand men, and Jeroboam's of twice that number; of whom five hundred thousand fell on the spot. Abijah had also Aza his son for successor, who reigned forty years in great prosperity;

A.M. 3213. *a* PILGRIM *and* CLEOPHAS. 127

prosperity ; the reward of his zeal for purity of worship. His successor was the devout Jehosaphat ; 2Chron.xvii. in whose time the barbarous nations renewed their inroads, that even Jerusalem feared ; but making the Lord their refuge, the enemy 2 Chron. xx. was miraculously overthrown, turning their swords against one another. But this excellent Prince being succeeded by Jehoram his son, but 2Chron.xxi. the very reverse of him, the Philistines, Arabians, and other nations laid waste the country, and, advancing to Jerusalem, carried off much booty, particularly the treasure of the King's house, and, among other captives, his wives and daughters. He himself died of a painful and loathsome disease. His son and successor Ahaziah, following his 1Chron.xxii. wicked example, was killed by Jehu.

Pilgrim. What a miserable country ?

Cleophas. Oh Son, this is nothing to what followed ; for Jerusalem increased in her sins, and punishments kept pace with them. That sanguinary wretch, Queen Athaliah, caused all, who 2 Chron. xxii. 10. were in any wise related to the royal family of Judah, to be put to death. The only one who escaped this inhuman massacre, was ver. 11. one of the King's sons, an infant of about a twelvemonth old, called Joash, who, in the tumult, had been concealed in the temple. Six 2 Chron. xxiii. years after, the high priest Jehoiada, to whose care his education had been committed, and who lamented the prevalent abominations, set up Joash King of Judah ; whilst Athaliah, being carried out of the horse-gate, yonder eastward, and still lying in ruins, expiated her wickedness in her blood. But, alas, what came of it ! Why, the young prince behaved extremely well, 2 Chron. xxiv. whilst his venerable guardian had an eye over him ; but he was no sooner in his grave, than Joash disappointed the mighty hopes which had been con-

conceived of him, shook off every moral and religious consideration, set up idolatry, and, what no King of Israel or Judah had presumed, ordered himself to be worshiped as a deity: And farther to fill up the measure of his iniquity, Zacharias, the son of Jehoiada, to whom he owed his crown, was stoned for representing to him his impiety. The resolute Prophet gave up the ghost, appealing to God for his integrity; and, truly his blood has been required of this city to the very last, as you may see by the ruins every where about us. But this cruel King was murdered in his bed by his own servants.

Pilgrim. That they, who are set over a people for its good, should be so flagitious!

Cleophas. His son Amaziah was not much better; for God giving him some successes, he became so arrogant, that, contrary to a Prophet's advice, he would come to a rupture with Joash, King of Israel: The event was, that Joash gave him a severe defeat, pillaged Jerusalem, and dismantled it on the side towards his kingdom, that is, from Ephraim's gate yonder northward, to the angle gate. Amaziah was also murdered.

2 Chron.
xxvi.

This breach, however, was repaired by Uzziah his son, whom the Lord prospered in every thing, that he reduced several nations under tribute. But he likewise became lifted up, so as to oppose the priests in their functions. He would burn incense, and officiate in the sanctuary. But God manifested his displeasure: For while the King yet had the censer in his hand, he was struck with a leprosy, and continued so till his death, which happened in the fifty second year of his reign and the sixty eighth of his age, leaving the kingdom to his son Jotham, who proved a good prince, and accordingly reigned sixteen years, with great glory to himself and happiness to his people.

2 Chron.
xxvii.

Pilgrim.

Pilgrim. It gives me true pleasure to hear, that there were some good times for Jerusalem.

Cleophas. Yes. During the reigns of the two last mentioned Kings, every one sat quietly under his vine and his fig-tree, towns were rebuilt, the land every where cultivated, trade flourished, the husbandman and artificer had their hands full, and every one went about the country whither he would. You see it is a delightful country: The trees are green almost throughout the whole year, the winters being both short and mild; and as for the summer heats, they embellish the country with many exquisite and sightly products. It indeed may well be termed a land flowing with milk and honey. Besides, the celebration of the several parts of divine worship was very pleasing and august. Those two excellent Kings, David and Solomon, had bestowed great attention and expence on the external decorum, pleasure, and solemnity, and particularly the instruments and musicians. For, Son, though I still remember, with admiration, the delight I enjoyed, and the glorious things I beheld in that Temple, still noble in its ruins; yet I must believe, that the service was much more ravishing in the time of those munificent Princes.

Pilgrim. They must then have been very prosperous times.

Cleophas. But of very short duration: For Ahaz, son to the abovementioned Jotham, brought on a very different scene of affairs.

2 Chron.
xxviii. 1-4.

Pilgrim. How so, Father?

Cleophas. You see yonder a valley, between us and that hill southward.

Pilgrim. I see it.

Cleophas. This King erected there a large brazen image, to which he gave the name of Baal Jupiter, or Moloch. It was frequently made red hot; and two

K

walls,

walls, built on each side, to increase the fierceness of the fire. Hither, (would you believe men could be so infatuated?) parents brought their children as offerings to that idol, making them pass through the fire, or laying them in the red hot arms of the image, where they were burned to ashes. You will readily conceive, that all this did not pass in silence; but, lest the parents should be affected by the cries of their poor children, this horrid rite was attended with beating of drums and playing on loud instruments, and accordingly this vale was called Tophet, that is, Drum-Valley; also Gehenna, that is, Murder-Vale. This was a dreadful error, and quite repugnant to the nature of God, who, instead of sufferings, violence, and torture, has at heart the welfare and comfort of mankind; and to whom compassion, tenderness, and benevolence have always been more acceptable than cruelty and murder. If he ordered Abraham to sacrifice his son, the event shewed that it was meant only as a trial of his faith. Yet into this unnatural abomination, borrowed from the Ammonites and other neighbouring idolaters, King Ahaz drew the people, and sinned beyond the former Kings of Israel.

Pilgrim. After such an atrocious impiety, I conclude some judgment followed.

Cleophas. Most certainly: For not only
ver. 5---8.

the King of Syria came up against Jerusalem, and carried away multitudes to Damascus, but Pekah, King of Israel, defeating Ahaz himself in a battle, took captive two hundred thousand women and children. The Edomites and Philistines

ver. 17, 18. also ravaged the country, and plundered many cities; and Ahaz himself seized on many treasures, and sent them to Tiglath Pileser,

2 Kings xvi.
7, 8.

King of the Assyrians, to come up and help him, that the country every where was a scene of carnage. No misfortunes could bring him

him to a right way of thinking, and he died
amidst his impieties. ver. 20.

Pilgrim. Dismal times ! when all knowledge of God
seemed extinguished.

Cleophas. Greece, a stranger to the divine law,
seemed now more happy than this corrupted land ;
for Homer, in his fine Poems, spread a great light
among his countrymen. Hesiod also wrote a system
of excellent morality, on leaden tables ; and his calendar
of the courses of the heavenly bodies leads to very no-
ble ideas of the Creator ; whilst in Judah there was a
deplorable declension from true knowledge and reli-
gion. Yet did God enlighten this profligate age with two
very distinguished luminaries : Isaiah, who, before that
idolatrous Prince, Ahaz, uttered this glorious pro-
phesy : “ Behold, a virgin shall conceive and bear a
son, and hisname shall be called Immanuel, that is, God
with us.” Oh, sacred name ; a name rich in consolations !
And yet I have lived to see the time.

Pilgrim. You are all in tears again, Father. It
gives me pain that I am so troublesome to you.

Cleophas. I say that I have lived to see that adorable
promised Son. That expressive Prophet has farther de-
lineated him so much to the life, in many places, as if
he also had seen him in his humiliation on earth. I and
my coteremporaries know his prediction to be true in
every point ; but of this we shall talk hereafter more at
large.

Pilgrim. And who was the second luminary ?

Cleophas. No other than a son of the
prophane Ahaz, named Hezekiah, a prince
of real piety and goodness, a true father
and shepherd of Israel. He assembled together the dis-
persed flocks, sent messengers to such as had been car-
ried away by Salmanassar, and celebrated a general Pass-
over at Jerusalem with astonishing magnificence. He
cleansed the house of the Lord from the abominations
of his forefathers. He hewed down the groves, which

2 Chron.
xxix, xxx,
xxxi.

had been so delightfully planted to allure the people to idolatry; and broke to pieces the images. In a word, as his father had been extremely wicked, to the infinite detriment of the people, he was goodness in the abstract, and promoted their happiness in every thing; that now the sun, so long hid from them, seemed to be rising again.

Pilgrim. And in such calamitous times it would be the more gladdening.

Cleophas. There was indeed great joy throughout the land, but it was soon sadly embittered: For when this

2 Kings xviii.
13, &c, King had reigned fourteen years very happily, the Assyrians overspread the country like locusts, and took many cities. Their

King Sennacherib had projected nothing less than to treat Jerusalem, as his father, ten years before, had Samaria. He sent a haughty summons, with terrible threatnings if the city did not immediately open its gates to him on his appearance; whilst his officers stood in the front of his camp, brandishing their spears, and swords, and broad glittering shields, in boast of their Monarch's invincible forces. Hezekiah sent him vast treasures, even to cutting off the gold from the doors of the temple; but nothing would pacify him.

Pilgrim. What a grief must that have been to the good Hezekiah!

2 Kings xix.
1-44. *Cleophas.* It was past expression: However, he took the best measures for averting the danger; assembling the people to a so-

lemn worship, spreading Sennacherib's arrogant letters before the altar, praying himself at the head of the assembly, and sending messengers to the prophet Isaiah, requesting his intercession. Accordingly Isaiah assured him of the divine succour; which soon appeared, to the great astonishment and joy of the people of Judah.

Pilgrim. Did some Prince, then, send an army to relieve Hezekiah?

Cleophas.

A.M. 3233. *a* PILGRIM *and* CLEOPHAS. 133

Cleophas. The deliverance was wrought
by one single angel, in one night's time. ver. 35.

Pilgrim. This must have caused a greater joy, than
if it had been accomplished by human means.

Cleophas. In the evening, nothing but sighing and
groaning was heard in the camp of the Assyrians.
Some died at the table where they were revelling, with
their victuals in their mouths; another fell backwards
in his armour; a third dropped down as he was stand-
ing centry. Some, endeavouring to help their fainting
neighbours in their tents, fell helpless themselves over
them. The princes and generals, a little before heated
with wine, shivered with cold, and, before a physician
could be fetched, were stone dead: And, what was
most, the tidings of the condition of the army could
not be carried to the King; for no sooner any came
out into the open air, than they were instantly struck
down, just as if shot with fiery darts; that the haughty
Monarch, with the few remaining, on coming abroad
the next morning, had a dismal spectacle before them,
of the fields covered with dead, all in mournful silence,
no drum, or trumpet, or any military noise. If he
knocked at any hut, the answer was an expiring sob;
if he called for attendance, nobody stirred; ver. 36.
that, in an agony of terror and despair, he
betook himself to a precipitate flight, leaving near two
hundred thousand men thus miraculously deprived of
life: And, so wretched is it to put one's trust in idols,
he was afterwards murdered by his two
sons, in the temple of his fictitious god. ver. 37.

Pilgrim. A dreadful catastrophe, indeed; but a very
fortunate event for the people of Jerusalem, who,
I suppose, did not neglect to make the most of it.

Cleophas. They flocked out to see the camp of the
Assyrians; and now their hearts, oppressed by long
dejection, were cheered with the wines remaining.
The silk curtains, tapestry, rich apparel, gold and silver
vessels, chains, rings, jewels, and many other things

of value, compensated the poor people for the distresses of the war, in which their lot was so severe : And King Hezekiah, and all the devout persons within Jerusalem, blessed God with one voice for such a deliverance, before unheard of, and as a never to be forgotten encouragement to a firm confidence in God.

Pilgrim. This event must also have given a fresh stability to the kingdom of Judah.

Cleophas. It promised so ; but the contrary soon declared itself : For this good King dying, after a reign of twenty two years, left the kingdom to a son, who exceeded even his grandfather in all kinds of enormities.

Pilgrim. I am really sorry for such a return of calamities.

Cleophas. And I much more ; yet, however disagreeable the relating such occurrences is to me, I must give you some account of them, that you may not be ignorant of the causes which brought on the destruction of a city, once the most glorious of all the cities on earth. This son, whose name was Manasseh, being young and thoughtless, misled by the false Prophets, adopted all the Pagan usages, and departed from God ; erected images to Baal Jupiter, and other Constellations and Planets, and worshiped them as the rulers and disposers of human affairs ; he addicted himself to magic, and foretelling by the singing of birds, virtues of plants, and other chimæras ; then all his favour was engrossed by astrologers, diviners, and sorcerers ; his stupid superstition had even extinguished in him all natural affection ; causing his children to pass through a dreadful fire in honour of Moloch, a mass of brass fashioned into a human form, rather than suffer them to continue in the amiable worship instituted by David, unstained by human victims, and calculated to the improvement of the mind in sacred knowledge and holiness.

Pilgrim. Horrid perverseness !

Cleophas.

Cleophas. Besides, he made Jerusalem as a slaughter-house; and that excellent venerable oldman, Isaiah, he caused to be sawed in two, for reproving his impiety.

Pilgrim. Such barbarity!

Cleophas. Not a day passed without seeing some righteous persons put to the worst of deaths, only for their attachment to truth, and refusing to conform to the King's frantic idolatry; the streets ran with blood, for never did tyrant commit such cruelties; there was no escaping his fury; till at length God's vindictive justice was kindled against the abominations of this city, and broke out in flames, which no propitiation could extinguish.

Pilgrim. By what you say, this King was worse than the very heathen.

Cleophas. Much worse; indeed all reason and humanity seemed to have abandoned Judah, and to have settled among the heathen; for, about this time appeared among the Lacedæmonians, that upright legislator Lycurgus; and among the Romans, Numa Pompilius; besides, Philosophy began to flourish in Greece, under those respectable luminaries, Thales, Periander, Cleobulus, Pittacus, Bias, Archilochus, and others of the like noble cast; whilst, alas! this city, which God had chosen for the residence of his glory, was as a squalid widow, void of every appearance of decency, virtue, and religion, and this, chiefly through the profligacy of the men in power.

Pilgrim. Surely Heaven did not wink at such enormities?

Cleophas. No; Manasseh fell into the hands of the Assyrians, who carried him in fetters to Babylon; but having, in his distress, humbled himself before God, with the deepest contrition, he was restored to the throne: And now he used his power only to do good and praise-worthy acts, suppressing every appurtenance of idolatry, assisting at the pure worship of the true God,

ver. 11.

ver. 12.

repairing the city, reforming all abuses, and, to the last day of his life, shewing great zeal to make amends for his former impiety. After a reign of fifty five

years he was succeeded by his son Ammon, whose profane conduct brought him

ver. 20, &c.
2 Kings xxii.

1.

2 Chron.

xxxiv, 1, &c.

to an untimely end, being, before he had reigned two years, killed by his own servants; but leaving a son called Josiah, then only in his eighth year, who may be ranked among the best Princes, which reigned over Judah.

Pilgrim. What changes this kingdom underwent!

Cleophas. Indeed it something resembled a spotted beast; but I must not slightly pass over Josiah's virtues: Having from his childhood a strong sense of religion, he went in person every where, to see that all

2 Kings xxii,
xxiii.

2 Chr. xxxv.
xxxiv.

relics of idolatry were totally abolished, and the true worship punctually observed; and in beautifying the temple; an old book, all mouldy, was found in a corner, full of

cobwebs, and what should it prove, but the entire Law of Moses; which being read before the King and people, it filled them with joy and zeal for the glory of God, that immediately every body was in motion, the images were pulled down, the high places levelled, the groves hewn down, the places for effeminate spectacles and vicious gratifications, which in the times of impiety had been built round the temple, were demolished; the chariots of the Sun and Moon (dedicated to Apollo and Diana,) were broke to pieces, all kinds of worship of Jupiter, or any other of the heavenly bodies, were interdicted; the strange altars, together with those erected by Jeroboam to the golden calves, were all broke down; the priests, the chief instigators to error and vice, were slain, or, as they had offered multitudes of innocent victims to Moloch, were consumed by fire;

2 Kings xiii.
1, &c.

even their mouldering bodies, their skeletons were dug up and burned, according

to

A.M. 3304. a PILGRIM and CLEOPHAS. 137
to the prediction of Iddo, three hundred and sixty years before.

Pilgrim. A thorough zeal, indeed.

Cleophas. Farther, he gathered together all Israel, and celebrated the Passover with astonishing solemnity, that every man's heart seemed strengthened afresh to serve the Lord with steadfastness; but alas! twelve years after this blessed reformation, 2Kingsxxiii. 29, 30. the pious Josiah fell in a battle, against Necho, King of Egypt, who had invaded Syria. In him fell the prosperity of Israel, and the glory of Jerusalem, which since has 2 Chron. xxxv. 20—24. never raised its head.

Pilgrim. What an affliction this must have been to all good persons at Jerusalem.

Cleophas. There was such weeping and wailing, such mourning and lamenting on the plains of Megiddo among all ranks, that no words can describe it. They wrung their hands, rent their garments, lifted up their voices to heaven; the fingers turned their mirth into sadness, and played and 2 Chron. xxxv. 24, 25. sang only melancholy tunes; every one gave himself up to sorrow, as for the loss of a father. The prophet Jeremiah himself, a most heavenly-minded man, was extremely affected with the death of this good prince, well knowing what woes were coming on Judah, when deprived of so good a shepherd.

Pilgrim. Did such very calamitous times, then, succeed?

Cleophas. Oh, Son, it is a heart-breaking story to relate: Then what must it be to have seen that oppression, that prophaneness, which then began to overspread this city and country, till its utter destruction.

Pilgrim. I would willingly be let into some knowledge of such remarkable things.

Cleophas. You must know, two potent monarchies, Egypt and Assyria, rose up against each other, with various

various fortune; but the country of Judah was exposed to the ravages of both. Jeohaz at this time sat on the throne of his father, the good Josiah; but the abovementioned Necho, coming a second time, flushed with victory, dethroned him, and carried him away captive, together with immense treasures of all kinds, appointing his brother Jehoiakim King in his stead. And after a short interval of only four years quiet, Nebuchadnezzar, King of Assyria, gave Necho a signal defeat near the river Euphrates, and pillaged all his territories as far as the city of Pelusium. This whole country trembled for fear, and suffered extremely from the soldiery, whose insatiable avidity stripped the people every where of utensils, money, cattle, corn, and every thing valuable. Oh, that this Jehoiakim had walked in the footsteps of his excellent father! But in cruelty he exceeded Phalaris, under whose monstrous tyranny Agrigentum then groaned. And now again the Assyrians over-ran the land, and forced him to pay tribute, which he did for three years successively, till the eleventh of his reign.

Pilgrim. I cannot help wondering at the degeneracy of the good Josiah's children.

Cleophas. Not one of them in the least took care to resemble his father; but Jehoiakim was, of all, the most prophane and wicked. Among innumerable other crimes, he spilled a great deal of innocent blood. That faithful prophet of God, Uriah, was killed by an executioner, for representing to him the wickedness of his proceedings; and the prophet Jeremiah owed his safety only to flight: For this pious man, unable to suppress his anguish at the approaching desolation of his country, stood at a gate of the temple, earnestly preaching the terrors of the Lord, and foretelling the calamities which the sins then in vogue would soon bring on Judah; but in vain. The false prophets buoyed up the

A.M. 3343. a PILGRIM and CLEOPHAS. 139

the people, and so incensed the King against Jeremiah, that he cut the roll of his Prophecies in pieces, and threw them in the fire. But punishment soon followed this prophane indignity; for in the eleventh year of his reign, relying on support from Egypt, he refused to pay the tribute: On which Nebuchadnezzar marched towards Jerusalem with such an army, that the King of Egypt durst not take the field; and Jehoiakim, without offering the least resistance, opened the gates. In rushed the soldiery, who made horrid carnage among the middling and lower classes, carrying away also multitudes of captives, especially young persons of the noble or wealthy families. Among these

Dan. i.

were the prophets Daniel and Ezekiel; also Shadrach, Mefech, and Abednego. King Jehoiakim was loaded with chains, and, with the rest, carried to Babylon; where soon after, as Jeremiah had foretold, he was killed, and, being dragged out of the city like a dead beast, was thrown into a pit. The temple also was again stripped of every thing valuable; and Jehoiakim, then but eight years old, being declared his father's successor, the whole train of the captives were marched out of Jerusalem; some torn from ease, honour, and plenty at home, had now nothing before their eyes but servitude in a foreign country.

Pilgrim. I sympathize with their sufferings.

Cleophas. Alas, Son, one stroke succeeded another; for scarce were three months over, when the Assyrians renewed their havock, and, presenting themselves before Jerusalem, made a breach in its wall. On a summons, the young King, together with his mother and officers of the court, came out of the city with all the marks of submission and sorrow, and were immediately seized as captives. This was followed by taking possession of the city, plundering the temple of what little remained in it, and carrying away to Babylon ten thousand of the most substantial citizens, and all the artificers, especially those who dealt in implements of war.

Now

Now what brought all this misery on Jerusalem, was sin; had they turned from the evil of their ways, good would have dropped down on them like a copious dew; but vice was rooted into habit, and neither admonition nor punishment could prevail over idolatry, and other heathenish abominations, as too plainly appeared also in after-times.

Pilgrim. I am no less amazed than grieved. This is, indeed, a history full of striking events.

Cleophas. This young Prince having been thus injuriously deprived of his royalty, and carried away as the conqueror's slave, Zedekiah, his father's brother, was advanced to the crown, being the twenty second, and the last King of Judah from Saul; but under his administration things went on in the same wretched course as under the preceding. Jeremiah did not cease to cry aloud to the people, exhorting them to speedy repentance, and by several tokens indicating the approaching destruction of the city; but instead of any attention paid to him, he was ridiculed and insulted as brainfick, and chiefly by the men of dignity and literature. Another piece of Zedekiah's misconduct was, the violating his oath, and revolting against the King of Babylon; who, hereupon, was soon at the gates of Jerusalem with a prodigious army. In the mean time the King of Egypt coming up to Zedekiah's assistance, the Assyrian Prince decamped and marched to give him battle. Now the false prophets triumphed; Jeremiah was a visionary; not a stone of Jerusalem should
 Jerem. xxxvii. be moved out of its place; and all the attempts of its enemies end in their own confusion. These wicked men prevailed so far, that Jeremiah was beaten and thrown into prison; but the God, whom he served, preserved his valuable life.

Pilgrim. But could the King approve of such injustice?

Cleophas. Alas! In the hands of his nobles he was like a woollen rag, to be turned and twined any way;
 a child

a child is not more pliable to his tutor's will. But now for the sad upshot of iniquity and departing from the Lord. The King of the Assyrians, or Chaldees, as some writers call him, returned, and invested Jerusalem so closely, that neither cat nor dog could escape. Then was Zedekiah afraid, and sent for Jeremiah out of the prison, who declared to him the word of the Lord, and that if he did not surrender the city, it would be destroyed. Yet in such awe did the King stand of his nobles, that all the declarations and intreaties of Jeremiah were of no avail; and for having advised a surrender, the nobles would not let the King rest, till Jeremiah was cast into a miry dungeon, where he must have perished by filth and hunger, had not a pious courtier zealously solicited his release. Jer. xxxviii.

Pilgrim. How much faithful prophets suffer for declaring wholesome truths; and a people, when under wicked governors! For the distress in the city may be supposed very great.

Cleophas. Say, rather, horrible and shocking to nature. The famine increased; the poor lay dying in the streets; their cadaverous faces, their emaciated bodies, their trembling joints spoke their case. The children cried for bread, and there was none to give them. Infants expired at the breasts, which now yielded no more milk: Skins, roots, any thing that could be found was greedily eaten. Persons brought up in delicacy had not a bit of mouldy bread. The famished burghers, dragging their spears, crawled to their stations as centinels; whilst the enemy, having plenty of all things, carried on their assaults with never-ceasing fury. This deplorable famine produced a pestilence. The lanes and streets were strewed with corpses, the survivors being too weak to bury the dead. One saw his father, the other his mother, sister, brother, or intimate friend dying in the most extreme misery. Yet, amidst all these calamities, this poor blinded people could

could not see, that the cause of them was vice and prophaneness, as Jeremiah had strongly represented to them.

Pilgrim. How long lasted this distressful siege?

Cleophas. About eighteen months.

Pilgrim. It is natural to think they would have hearkened to Jeremiah, and surrendered in time.

Cleophas. They were always in hopes that the Chaldeans would have raised the siege; for the

Jer. xxviii. false prophets kept them up in such a persuasion. "Never fear, (said they) God will protect his people. This is the Lord's temple, the place he has chosen for sacrifices to be offered to him. Never will God permit that it shall be destroyed: Rather is it to be expected, that the vessels, which have been carried hence, shall be restored; for this is the residence of his name and of his glory." Thus they spirited up the people, famished as they were, to a vigorous resistance, which occasioned great effusions of blood; for the enemy, both by stratagems and open force, pushed the siege without giving quarter, so that few escaped, except those who, according to Jeremiah's former counsel, went over to the enemy: But these were looked on as traitors to Judah, and the prophet himself was reputed no better.

Pilgrim. A specious self deceit! But was it not of infinitely more concern to defend the temple of their hearts from sin, than the outward temple from the Chaldeans?

Cleophas. Ay, had they minded that, they would also have saved the outward; for all God required of them was, to keep a clean heart. But let us hasten to the end. The besieged being, by famine, incapable of any farther efforts, the Chaldeans, one night, making a general assault, forced their way into the city. The King, on this, together with his wives, children, officers, and guards, immediately fled through a breach,

¹ Kings xxv.

² Chron.

xxxvi.

Jer. xxxix.

lii.

a breach, along a deep valley, towards yonder wilderness in the East, interspersed with eminences. But there is no escaping the hand of God; the Chaldæan troops came up with him in the wilderness near Jericho, and carried him and his attendants to Nebuchadnezzar, then at Riblath in Syria, where now stands Antioch. Imagine these poor creatures driven along, late and early, over hills and vallies; the muddy ponds through which they passed were a sad memento of the mire where Jeremiah had suffered so much, only for endeavouring to reclaim them from those sins which had involved them in their present calamities, and he, to strengthen his admonitions, had foretold.

Pilgrim. But what must have been the condition of the city.

Cleophas. Indeed, my heart relents to relate it: None were spared, neither sex, age, nor rank were minded; the exulting soldiers ran about the city, stabbing and sabreing all that came in their way; children were fixed to the points of spears; the streets were covered with the mangled bodies of venerable old men; the sanctuaries ran with the blood of priests. Worse still was the fate of multitudes of women, first objects of the soldiers lust, then victims to their barbarity; the young persons their avarice spared to sell for slaves; every street rang with drums and trumpets, mingled with screams and outcries of the miserable people, begging in vain for mercy. The rage of slaughter being satiated, all who remained were bound with cords, and driven away like sheep: The High Priest was dragged out of his asylum, the nobles from their palaces, and the wealthy citizens, instead of their comfortable houses, were thrust together into huts. Their rich furniture they saw broken to pieces, or a prey to the flames; the plate, the jewels, the gold chains and rings, amassed by usury, now divided as spoils among their insulting conquerors; the temple itself was no more spared than a common building, every rich decoration

coration hewn down; the molten sea, the golden covering, the whole sanctuary, Solomon's gold and silver vessels and utensils, together with all the treasures in the King's house, were loaded on horses, camels, and mules, and carried away to the Assyrian camp. A heart-breaking sight to those who lately had revelled in pride and luxury; the pillage being finished, the enemy proceeded to demolish the walls, and gates, and that splendid temple.

Pilgrim. It is enough, Father, that the Jews of those times wept for this desolation, acquiesce in the dispensations of divine justice, and proceed in your narrative.

Cleophas. I say, that splendid temple, which, during four hundred and twenty seven years, had been a crown of glory to Judah, and the admiration of all nations, was set on fire, and with its flames were mingled those of stately palaces and other edifices; in a word, for the subject is too melancholy to dwell on, such was the conflagration, that of the whole city, all that remained standing was some fragments of lofty walls, as monuments of its antient grandeur.

Pilgrim. To what changes are all worldly things subject!

Cleophas. Yes, for at the same time the vast city of Nineveh, in Assyria, was destroyed by Cyareres, King of the Medes.

Pilgrim. But previous to any foreign history, inform me what became of the unfortunate Zedekiah.

Cleophas. His fate was deplorable indeed; at his appearance before Nebuchadnezzar, who sat on a glittering throne, amidst his nobles and warriors, after being reproached for his perfidy, in violating his oath, and revolting against the King; his children, one after another, were killed before his face, by a common executioner, that none of his offspring might be left to succeed to the crown; under the agonies which this spectacle must have excited, the same executioner seized

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seized him, and put out his eyes; thus he, who when seeing was spiritually blind, now, in his blindness, saw his errors, and how fatally he had been misled by the false Prophets. The next victims were the High Priest Serajah, and Zephaniah, the second in rank, who were beheaded. A like sentence was executed on the King's Chancellor and Chamberlain, together with three Captains of the Temple; seven Counsellors of State also lost their heads, for having dissuaded the King, when of himself inclinable to have followed Jeremiah's advice. Nor was the King's cruelty satisfied with so many illustrious deaths; sixty more Nobles of the first rank suffered in the same manner, the King all the while looking on with a supercilious insensibility. The bulk of the people remaining, were, as had been prophesied, driven like cattle, to the country of Babylon. Such was the period of the Kingdom of Judah, near five hundred years after Saul, in the forty-third Olympiad of the Greek Chronology; Nebuchadnezzar being King of Assyria, and Tarquinius Priscus of Rome, which had been built a hundred and forty-five years, and then bid fair for great prosperity; as also the city of Carthage, founded by a Princess named Dido, a hundred and fifty six years before Rome.

Pilgrim. You told me, Father, that God had promised David an everlasting and unperishable kingdom; and here we see it brought to an end: Nay, the Heathens, who never had any such promise, seem to have been more prosperous than the children of Israel.

Cleophas. To short-sighted man it may appear so: yet, in the very height of all these calamities, was this promise renewed, both by Isaiah, Jeremiah, and other Prophets; and not only in Judea, but even at Babylon, in a time of exile, captivity, and oppression; the time, place, and every circumstance specified; how, when, and where, was to be born that wonderful King, by whom the sceptre of Judah should be restored: And it has also been fulfilled in every particular; how-

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ever to you, as seeing me, a poor old man, weeping among ruins, it may seem incredible. To you is unknown what has arisen from the ashes of this Phoenix, and the wonderful things spoken of by those who expect such a Kingdom. How, Son! would you have one misfortune to be continually treading on the heels of another? Defect to follow on defect? Do not you see that all things tend to renewal and stability? and you would imagine that, which God had in all ages promised to the Saints, to have been fulfilled in the former defectuous state. So has this corrupt race continued to assert, and in the blindness of their understandings persecuted and massacred God's people: But the particular recollection of that horrible catastrophe, under which Jerusalem sunk, quite overpowers me.

Pilgrim. I know, Father, grief hurts you much; therefore you shall see, I'll patiently wait the order of your relation. I long to hear what happened to this people and country antecedently to the present state and condition.

Cleophas. Well may I say, with the benevolent Jeremiah, *Ob that my head were waters, and mine eyes a fountain of tears, that I might weep day and night for the slain of my people!* For of the like calamities which he saw, have I also been an eye witness; but, according to your desire, I return to the order of my narrative. Know then, first, that this revolution was matter of great joy among the common people: as now, instead of being oppressed by the Nobility and by usurers, to whom their necessities often obliged them to have recourse, parcels of land and whole villages were given to them; thus they, who used to toil for scanty wages, were now building barns and store-houses for laying up the various products of their estates. No cry of distress was now heard; all places shewed plenty, and a chearful enjoyment of it; and nothing seemed to hinder but this happy state might have continued, had not

not some leading men of the Jews treacherously murdered Gedaliah, the Chaldæan Governor, and afterwards, contrary to Jeremiah's advice, gathering the people together, fled into Egypt, fearing the Chaldæans; they forcibly carried that good man with them, and began to set up the former idolatry. These were enormities which he could not connive at; and his remonstrances galling their consciences, they stoned him to death. Thus the country, as had been prophesied, lay waste seventy years.

Pilgrim. But what became of the Jews at Babylon?

Cleophas. That is well minded: But do not you observe, that night is coming on?

Pilgrim. I am so delighted with your conversation, that, were it not too much for you, I could wish the day three times as long.

Cleophas. For my part, I could go through it, but in every thing moderation is best; and to-morrow morning, if you are so inclined, we will meet in this same place, and prosecute our subject. In the meantime, if you will take up with such entertainment as my house affords, you may depend on a hearty welcome. I live no farther off than yonder, close by that high wall.

Pilgrim. Father, you treat me with a courtesy far beyond any thing I deserve; no body can be better pleased with your company than I am: But it will be most proper for me to be alone, and I shall employ my solitude in reflecting on what I have already heard. I shall find some shelter or other; and I am so desirous of knowing the end of this astonishing history, that you may be assured of my keeping to your appointment.

Cleophas. A great deal of matter still remains, and, I promise myself, nothing worth your information shall escape me. Well seeing you are inclined to be left to your own thoughts, I will not trouble you with any pressing invitations, for by such needless ceremonies,

it frequently happens, that good discourse is interrupted; one urging, and the other refusing. It suffices to shew, once for all, that it is a pleasure to us to entertain a worthy mind. It is my way in all things to be as plain as possible, and have but one word.

Pilgrim. That is just my way of thinking; now, Father, let me help you up.

Cleophas. Oh!—You must not wonder that my old joints are a little stiff.

Pilgrim. I wonder much more that you preserved such an activity at your uncommon age. A hundred and twenty years! Why you may go a great way, and not meet with your equal. Well, my dear Father, I heartily wish you a good night; God be with you.

Cleophas. I thank you, Son! The like to you.

DIALOGUE III.

PART the SECOND.

Containing the space of 605 years, namely, from the Babylonish Captivity to the Nativity of our blessed Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

Pilgrim. **Y**onder is the good old man already sitting on Mount Sion, with his silver beard. I wonder how he gets there so readily; for to me, from this plain here to the top of the hill seems not less than eight hundred feet perpendicular height. Then the way is encumbered with nettles and stones: But good will and zeal level all difficulties. I see his eye is towards me; and he seems ready to oblige me with a farther account of the great events which he has treasured up in his memory. Good morrow, Father! May the divine light shine on your heart, as the glorious sun now irradiates the earth.

Cleophas. The best of wishes, Son! But are not you lateish?

Pilgrim. Why, indeed, in walking about the city, and viewing the noble remains, I had a little forgot myself. The multitude of grand ruins, which now, I perceive, are haunted by owls, crows, and swallows, have whetted my desire to know the final conclusion of the history of a city, which once must have been of an amazing magnificence; and as you have related to me its vicissitudes till its first destruction, together with the carrying away of the children of Israel into Babylon, I could wish you would go on with some particulars of the state and condition of that people among their new masters.

Cleophas. There it was where we broke off. You will naturally think in what plight those captives must

have been, carried some hundreds of miles from their own country. Every thing had now a different appearance; hills, rivers, fields, woods, animals, dress, customs. They were looked on disdainfully, and their treatment was harsh. They saw dumb idols worshipped, in contempt of the one God. Their own rites were the subject of mockery; they themselves insulted and ridiculed for worshiping a Deity, who had not been able to protect them. This was an extreme affliction to the more considerate. Now they saw in themselves fulfilled, what David had long before prophesied, that they should hang their harps on the willows, and think on Jerusalem with tears. They were stung to the heart for their profligate abuse of time in the days of prosperity. They lamented, wringing their hands: "Oh Jerusalem, Oh! our sanctuary, how art thou laid waste and defiled! Oh good Jeremiah, how affectionately didst thou counsel and forewarn us; but we despised thee! Oh could we recover past time! Were we restored to our former state, how would we behave! with what assiduity and fervour serve our God, love one another, and punctually observe all the ordinances of the Law!" Vain remorse! and vows, too probably, arising only from a sharp sense of their wretchedness. They were now in the hands of the Chaldeans; to them they were to bow, them they were to serve, and submit to their caprice and haughtiness: And such irksome servitude would naturally obtrude on their minds the sad remembrance of their former abuses of God's goodness, their revels, their spectacles, their avarice, their oppression, their voluptuousness, their violences, their homicides, and other abominations. Stripped of their wealth, they now saw in themselves all the miserable state of the poor, whom their pitiless usury had exhausted; they felt in themselves the anguish which their blindness and obduracy had caused to the holy prophets, contemptuously turning the deaf ear to them. Now they grieved
and

and vowed, wept and wailed, when their case was irremediable.

Pilgrim. I should rather think, from your discourse, that it were much better for them to be thus chastised, than to have continued in a dissolute prosperity.

Cleophas. That is no bad observation, Son; for God permits all things to fall out for man's greatest good. It would have been better, had they never given occasion for such chastisement.

Pilgrim. Agreed; but I have another question. Were they not compelled to worship the idols of the country?

Cleophas. This opens a new scene of wonders. This King, Nebuchadnezzar, had reduced the Ammonites, Moabites, Egyptians, and the whole coast of Libya as far as Spain; and, ascribing such signal successes to Jupiter Belus, the idol of his ancestors, he erected to it a huge golden image, with a proclamation that every one should fall down and worship it, and the recusants be thrown into a fiery furnace. You may well think how this affected the Jews, who would rather have died than complied. The Nobility, and particularly three youths, who had been brought captives with Jehoiakim, were first practised upon. The King threatened, and they refused. They were shewn the flaming furnace. Even by that they were not intimidated. On which the King, scarce possessing himself through rage, ordered them to be bound and thrown in; when, behold! the fire, that destroying element, made no hurtful impression on these magnanimous youths. Their bands fell off, and they walked serenely together amidst the flames, as in a cool embowered alley; and instead of the shrieks and outcries expected from such a place of torture, the vast furnace resounded with strains of chearful melody; and instead of the wide-blazing flames, were seen the resplendent beams of an angelic form. Such wonders could not fail of making an advantageous impression

Dan. iii.

on the King, and thus saved not only the three youths from death, but probably the whole race of the Jews from utter extermination; and by the most torturing deaths which idolatrous bigotry could invent.

Pilgrim. These things were unquestionably the effects of a divine superintendency in their favour.

Dan. vi. *Cleophas.* From a similar danger the prophet Daniel was also delivered some years after; being, for his attachment to the sacred religion, thrown among a troop of lions, which immediately were seen to become as lambs, playing before him, fawning on him, and licking his feet: And this did not proceed from their not being hungry, but their voracity was restrained, and a gentleness infused into them; till the King, being by this miracle convinced that the God whom Daniel worshiped was the true God, ordered his adversaries to be thrown in, when the lions immediately shewed themselves lions, tearing them to pieces and devouring them, with a rage as if never to be satiated.

Pilgrim. How gloriously God distinguishes his faithful servants!

Cleophas. He also was so eminently endued with wisdom and knowledge, that the magicians, astrologers, counsellors, scribes, and other learned men, whom Kings used to entertain about their court, owned their great inferiority to Daniel. To him nothing was difficult or obscure. Many signal events he clearly foretold; not only relating to the Jews, the rebuilding and destruction of this city, the advent and office of the true Messiah, his everlasting kingdom, and his appearance at the final judgment; but also, in the most perfect manner, did he predict and indicate the succession of the most noted pagan monarchies, their nature and constitution, their commencement and duration; and all this so precisely and perspicuously, that his book had much more the air of a history than of a prophecy: And though, at this time, Solon and other philosophers

philosophers were deservedly in high esteem among the Greeks, yet will they not bear a comparison with the inspired Daniel. His life was remarkable also for its length; for Nebuchadnezzar was succeeded by his son Evilmerodach, who set ^{2Kings xxiv.} Jehoiakim, King of Judah, at liberty, and ^{27.} filled the throne thirty years. After him reigned Belshazzar, a profane luxurious prince, who, ^{Dan. v.} to enhance the splendor of one of his revels, caused the sacred vessels of the temple to be used; but in the height of his ostentation God signified to him, that both his life and crown would soon be taken from him. Daniel, outliving those monarchs, was loaded with favours by Darius the Mede; and, towards the end of his life, he immortalized his name in the East, by a most stately structure at Ecbatana, the capital of Media; as it still, in its unperishable splendor, shews the fragility of that spirit which shone so gloriously in Daniel.

Pilgrim. Blessed man! But concerning Belshazzar's losing his kingdom, I could wish to hear some of the circumstances.

Cleophas. I shall be very succinct on this head, confining myself to what is most material. There was a King in Media called Astyages, who ordered that the infant, of which his daughter was delivered, should be exposed to the beasts of the forest; it having been prophesied, that he would prove the overthrow of the kingdom: But the officer, charged with this cruel commission, so far from executing it, privately brought up the child. Cyrus, for such was his name, being grown up, and informed of the prophecy and his grandfather's intentions, applied to King Darius, by whose assistance he drove Astyages out of Media, and, pushing his success, suddenly broke into Babylon, at the very time when Belshazzar was profaning the sacred vessels at a banquet. This punishment was notified to him by a hand writing some characters on the wall,

wall, which none of his wise men could explain; till Daniel, being consulted, laid open their fatal import. Accordingly, that night Belshazzar fell by the sword; and in him ended the Assyrian monarchy, which, from Nimrod, had subsisted sixteen hundred and thirty six years, in an uninterrupted succession of thirty eight Sovereigns. This was the æra of the Persian monarchy, under the noble Cyrus its founder; who, with irresistible valour, penetrated into Asia, Syria, Egypt, and Armenia, and among other princes subdued Cræsus, King of Lydia, the richest monarch of all his contemporaries.

Pilgrim. The surprizing revolutions in the states of this world! But as measures often change with Sovereigns, surely the Jews must have been, in some measure, gainers or losers by these mutations.

Cleophas. They were great gainers, as you call it; 2 Chron. xxxvi. 22, 23. Ezra i. & ii. for Cyrus, in the very first year of his reign, which was the seventieth of the Captivity, discharged the Jews from their exile, and not only caused the sacred vessels to be restored to them, but commanded them to rebuild both the temple and city of Jerusalem, assuring them of all requisite assistance on his part. The Jews, with inexpressible transports of joy, assembled from all parts, under Zorobabel, grandson to Jehoiakim, King of Judah; and being in number between forty and fifty thousand, besides women and children, men and maid servants, together with a multitude of camels, horses, mules, and asses, laden with gold and silver, furniture, utensils, and especially the vessels of the sanctuary, they marched from Chaldæa to this city, which then lay all in ruins, as at present: And after a toilsome journey of above five hundred miles, through forests, wildernesses, mountains, also cities, towns, and cultivated countries, preserved by God's especial kindness, they at length came in sight of Jerusalem. At this they set up repeated shouts, accompanied with trumpets, sackbuts, cornets,

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cornets, harps, psalteries, hymns, and every token of exultation.

Pilgrim. I seem to partake of their joy. But how did they proceed?

Cleophas. No sooner were the beasts unladen and turned to grass, than the iron crows, mattocks, and pick-axes were at work to dig up the old foundations; and lines were drawn, under the direction of the old men, who pointed out, "Here stood this, and reached so far; and there that;" a tear now and then falling down their cheeks, at the sight of so many affecting objects. The carpenters, opening their chests, whetted their axes and sharpened their saws; the stonecutters were no less busy; and, on all sides, the smiths and nailors were heard. The high priest Jesua, with other principal men, superintended the works, and animated the artificers; though their zeal was of itself such, as to want no incentives or exhortations. Every thing was carried on with incessant dispatch; and, on the foundation of the temple being finished, the air rang with the sounds of trumpets, cymbals, sackbuts, and harps, and every musical instrument, mingled with the joyful acclamations of the people; whilst the more aged, who had seen the first temple, wept at the great disparity.

Ezra iii.
10—13.

Pilgrim. Strange contrariety of passions!

Cleophas. But, alas, the instability of human affairs! Their gladness was soon overcast with a cloud of sorrow.

Pilgrim. How so?

Cleophas. When the temple was pretty far advanced, messengers came from some neighbouring princes, jealous of the Jews, with orders, under the severest penalties, to cease rebuilding the city.

Ezra iv.

Pilgrim. Sad, indeed! But how could they presume to countermand what Cyrus had not only permitted but ordered?

Cleophas.

Cleophas. That prince, after prodigious successes, was at last defeated by Tomyris, Queen of the Scythians, who cut off his head, and plunged it in a vessel filled with blood, saying, "As blood has always been thy delight, now gorge thyself with it;" thus revenging the death of her son and all his nobles, who had a little before been killed in a battle against Cyrus. This great prince was succeeded by his son Cambyfes, who, being a voluptuous tyrant, was easily wrought on by the Samaritans and other enemies of the Jews; but after a reign of only six years, his horse stumbling he fell on his own sword. The advancement of
Ezra v. & vi.

Darius Hyftaspes, a wise and virtuous prince, to the throne of that monarchy, revived the depressed spirits of God's people, who, being farther encouraged by the prophets Haggai and Zachariah, fell to building; and herein their enemies could not molest them, having Cyrus's patent on their side, besides the public countenance of Darius, who had promoted Zorobabel to be his cup-bearer.

Pilgrim. Now, I hope, the building goes forward without any interruption.

Cleophas. The temple was finished in the sixth year of Darius, and consecrated with great solemnity; but the walls and most part of the city still lay in ruins, partly through inability and want of sufficient protection. Afterwards, in the reign of Xerxes, who had succeeded Darius, Ezra the scribe, a person of extraordinary abilities, came to Jerusalem, bringing with him a great number of people, and much riches. He was soon followed by Nehemiah, chief
Ezra vi.

cupbearer to Artaxerxes; who, being informed of the city's distress, obtained the King's leave to go thither. These glorious patriots gave themselves no rest till the walls of Jerusalem were completely repaired, and the gates hung. They also caused the people to be instructed in the Book of the Law; and settled every thing on the best footing.
Neh. i, ii, iii.

They

They also, sword in hand, opposed their envious enemies, and baffled all their plots and devices. In a word, more good did they do to the Jewish people, than Junius Brutus and Lucius Collatinus had, thirty years before, to the Romans, abolishing the regal government after a term of two hundred and forty four years under seven Kings; at which period Rome began to be governed by Consuls, as the Jews by Princes and High Priests. Of the former, the first was Resah Mesullam, of the tribe of Judah; of the latter, Joiakim, of the tribe of Levi. Under these lived Malachi, a prophet; and, as the last of that sacred class, he has prophesied concerning these and other times to come.

Neh. iv, v,
vi, &c.

Pilgrim. So the light of prophecy now withdrew, and, as it were, sealed itself up.

Cleophas. Yes: But God did not forsake the world, so as to withhold from it all manner of teaching and instruction; the beams of divine testimonies shone very gloriously among the Pagans; for, not to mention the famous prophecies of the Sibyls, a great number of philosophers in Italy, Greece, and Persia, as Simonides, Pythagoras, the laughing Democritus and weeping Heraclitus, exposed the folly of most human wishes, and the blindness and evils of our passions, at the same time exhorting them to place their happiness in religious and moral duties. And of the emptiness and fragility of worldly grandeur, these times afforded two striking instances; Xerxes, who, in a mad expedition against Greece, threw away an army of ten hundred thousand men; and Themistocles, who, after saving Athens by the defeat of that multitude, was banished.

Pilgrim. Now, Father, if you please, let us hear farther of the Jewish concerns.

Cleophas. And they contain particulars not unworthy notice; for that people, now rejoicing in the exercise of their religion, and the enjoyment of ease and freedom at home, after a harsh servitude in a foreign country,

country, were on the point of being extirpated root and branch.

Pilgrim. Surely they did not return to their former provoking impieties.

Cleophas. The case was this. Xerxes had been succeeded by his son Artaxerxes Longimanus, (also stiled Ahasuerus,) who, repudiating his Queen Vashti, married a Jewish maiden, called Esther. Mordecai, her uncle, not paying to Haman,

the King's favourite, the homage required, Chap. ii. this haughty courtier surreptitiously obtained an order for slaying, on a fixed day, all the Jews, young and old, and of both sexes, wherever they were found. Imagine the consternation and agonies of a people, thus, by royal authority, devoted to destruction; the mutual lamentation of parents and children, of husbands and wives; whilst the enemies of the Jews insulted over them, and prepared weapons for the massacre. But all moderate persons openly said, "The King's goodness had been surprized, and exclaimed against the inhuman adviser of such a decree." Now the Jews had nothing but death before their eyes; when, behold, God, who is wonderful in all his works, averts the danger. Scarce had the order reached the farthest borders of the land, when fresh expresses, who had been strictly commanded to use all possible expedition, bring advice of a revolution at court; "That Haman, at whose instigation the order had been issued, was hanged on a

gallows above seventy foot high; that Chap. vii. Mordecai, who had given information of a plot against the King's life, was advanced to the highest honours; and that, at the request of Queen Esther, the former order was repealed, and, in case of any

injury offered to the Jews, they were Chap. viii. allowed to repel force by force." This, their enemies, at first, refused to credit, till they had the mortification of seeing it formally published. On this signal deliverance, a sacred writer of ours says, "The Jews

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Jews had light, and gladness, and joy, and honour, and in every town a feast and a good day; and the people of the land became Jews, and the fear of the Jews fell upon them."

Pilgrim. Men being apt to be lifted up with prosperity, did not the Jews entertain some hopes that their former monarchy would be restored?

Cleophas. Very small ground was there for any such conceits. Indeed, the government of their priests went on in quiet and good order. Eliasib, who had succeeded Jehoiakim in that office, held it above forty years; and, on his decease it was conferred on Jehoiada. Yet, from the natural mutability of all worldly things, this was no sure foundation for any higher hopes; for, omitting the bloody wars which exhausted Greece, that country was afflicted with a strange pestilence; the hands, the feet, and even the head of some dropping off: Great numbers, impatient of the burning heat which attended this distemper, threw themselves into any waters, where they miserably perished. Other countries also groaned under wars and other deleterious calamities. Amidst such sudden changes and such accumulated miseries, what encouragement for hope? On which account Socrates, Hippocrates, Aristophanes, and other philosophers of these times, taught, that the good of the soul demanded our chief attention; and their dogmas they recommended by their shining examples.

Pilgrim. The good of the body, however, is not to be neglected.

Cleophas. To be sure; and the histories I am relating to you chiefly turn on the concerns of the body, worldly prosperity and adversity, yet as documents to bring us finally to the permanent felicity of the soul.

Pilgrim. What became of the Persian monarchy?

Cleophas. Longimanus dying, after a reign of forty four years, the crown devolved to Darius Nothus, in whose eighth year Johannan was made Ruler of the Jews;

Jews; which dignity he held fifty three years. Nothus was succeeded by Artaxerxes Mnemon, who, after giving his brother Cyrus a decisive defeat, reigned thirty six years. After him Ochus sat on the Persian throne twenty six years, and made very considerable conquests.

Pilgrim. Certainly many remarkable things must have happened in these times.

Cleophas. Many, indeed. But what signify to us the ransacking of Rome by the Gauls, the great Philosophers of Greece, Plato, Aristotle, and others; or the splendour of King Mausoleus's tomb, which was extolled as one of the wonders of the world. All such things are too mean, and withal too perishable, to be made any account of: For where are now the walls of the vast Babylon, that prodigious work of Queen Semiramis, the circuit of which was at least twenty two miles, the height twenty five yards, and on the breadth three carriages might go abreast; some hundred thousands of men were employed about them for many years; where her army of 1,700,000 foot, and 200,000 horse, with which she overcame Zoroaster, an Eastern Monarch, whose forces amounted to 400,000.

Pilgrim. To me it seems scarce possible, Father, that such numbers could be brought into the field.

Cleophas. Oh, Son, there is nothing strange in it; the longevity of antient times favours an immense increase of mankind: For suppose a father living a hundred years has ten sons and as many daughters, and these in the following hundred years have each ten sons and daughters, and so progressively; then, in a thousand years, the increase in only one line will be no less than a thousand millions; and a million is a thousand times a thousand.

Pilgrim. You account for it, indeed, Father; yet it is really astonishing.

Cleophas.

Cleophas. But, my dear Son, alas! what is all this power and magnificence! What is become of the temple of Diana at Ephesus, which was the pride of Asia? It was laid in ashes by a foolish warrior, only to perpetuate his name. Where is the temple of Olympus, with its wonderful image of Jupiter, and likewise all the celebrity of the Olympic games? Where the Mausoleum, that master-piece of skill, erected by Queen Artemisia in memory of her husband? Is it not a confused heap of ruins, which, as it were, intimate what reverses wait the most sumptuous and most splendid structures. Such shall be the end of the celebrated Pharos of Alexandria, and of the still much more famous Pyramids of Egypt, though some are of such antiquity, that we have no certain account of the building of them. There was also the Colossus, or brass statue of the Sun, which stood across the entrance of Rhodes harbour; the height of it was eight hundred feet, that ships, with their masts standing, sailed between its legs, and the radiance of it reflected a light to a great distance: This Colossus was also another wonder of the world; yet, after standing no longer than about two hundred years, it was thrown down by an earthquake; and by the fall the water swelled to such a degree, as nearly to drown the city. If you turn your eyes to fortresses, to towns accounted impregnable, how often are they dismantled, or even razed to the ground. How was Tyre renowned for its strength, opulence, and commerce! and, relying on its situation, being separated from the continent by the sea, it bid defiance to Alexander the Great; and what was the consequence; he immediately set his army to work, and carried on a mole from the main land to the city, made himself master of it, and, as had been prophesied, demolishing its walls, turned its palaces into stables, and its fine houses became fishermens huts. But enough of foreign transactions: Let us now return to the history of my countrymen, though many are the

M melancholy

melancholy scenes it offers; for it is ever their fate to lie under the oppressive yoke of the Heathens, who never treated them with common humanity.

Pilgrim. Say you so, Father?

Cleophas. Oh, it is lamentable that the sacred priesthood should have been so dreadfully polluted. Joannan, successor to Joiada, caused his own brother Jesus to be murdered in the temple. This drew on us the ravages and extortions of Bagoses, the Persian general, who vexed the land seven long years; the above murder, committed in such a place, having increased his contempt both of our nation and the temple.

Pilgrim. Melancholy events, indeed!

Cleophas. It was not long before something rather worse fell out; for Joannan having left two sons, and the elder, Jaddus, being High Priest, Manasses, the other married a Samaritan woman, and raised a schism in Israel. But, what was still worse, to harden the Samaritans in their error, he built another temple on Mount Gerizim, and induced many to bring their offerings thither, to the great detriment of the Law, and the scandal of the people in general; and these variances occasioned unspeakable calamities.

Pilgrim. Was there no officer of the King of Persia, who could suppress these disorders?

Cleophas. That kingdom was also in a miserable condition.

Pilgrim. In what respect?

Cleophas. After Artabanes, who had succeeded Ochus, the crown was conferred on another Darius, on whom the famous Alexander, son to Philip, King of Macedonia, made war; and his troops being veterans, well disciplined, and naturally brave, he, without much difficulty, totally defeated Darius's general. To retrieve this check, Darius marched in person against him, with an army three times superior in number to that of Alexander: Yet, so much does good discipline avail, the King, with his multitude, was routed; his mother,

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mother, wife, and children taken prisoners; and Alexander, improving this signal victory, reduced several provinces, penetrated into Syria, took Damascus, Sidon, and other famous cities; then proceeded to lay siege to Tyre, an object fit for his boundless love of military glory, it being in those times held impregnable, as surrounded on all sides by the open sea; yet, by means of some stupendous works, he made himself master of it, though not till after seven months, the inhabitants making a very vigorous defence. — In the mean time Sannaballat, Prince of Samaria, availing himself of this opportunity, went and paid homage to Alexander; of whom, by his adulatory submissions, he obtained leave for his son-in-law, Manassés, to build a temple on Mount Gerizim. The beginning of this unhappy schism among the Jews may be dated at about two hundred years after the Babylonish captivity.

Pilgrim. But Jerusalem—How did matters go there amidst these confusions?

Cleophas. The vicinity of such a conqueror filled the city with apprehensions; for Jaddus, the High Priest, having been something tardy in attending on Alexander, he was highly incensed, and threatened the city with fire and sword. Accordingly, after reducing Tyre, Gaza, and many other places much more defensible than Jerusalem, he directed his march thither. The earth shook under the rapid steps of his army, whilst in Jerusalem all was terror and desolation. However, they who have God for their refuge are always safe. A solemn prayer being appointed, the High Priest was directed to present himself before Alexander in his vestments, and attended by all the others of his order in the same manner; when that Prince, to whom it had been made known in a dream that this venerable person was the High Priest of the God to whom he owed his victories, instead of resentment and fury received him with affability, and even paid him the greatest honours.

Pilgrim. How wonderful are God's dealings!

Cleophas. His acknowledgments were not limited to the High Priest. He conferred great privileges on this city and the Jewish people, made costly donations to the temple, and, advancing into Egypt, overran the whole country, and all the northern coast of Africa; where, as a monument of his successes, he founded the city of Alexandria. Afterwards, returning into Persia, he totally subdued that kingdom, and extended his dominion as far as India. Such was the period of the Persian monarchy, two hundred and eight years after its foundation by Cyrus; and on its ruins arose the third monarchy, or that of the Greeks, something less than three hundred years after the captivity of Babylon.

Pilgrim. Now appearances seem to promise a settled quiet and happiness to the Jews.

Cleophas. Alas! so very far were these appearances from being realized, that unspeakable miseries poured on this poor people, with little or no respite; for Alexander the Great dying, and his heirs quarrelling about superiority, Ptolomy Lagus, King of Egypt, in the tenth year of Onias the High Priest, fraudulently surprized this city, coming in with his army on the sabbath day, under the appearance of amity. The people were all attending divine worship. Imagine their consternation at the trampling of the horses, and the glittering of the arms: And now the Egyptians, by their commander's order, fell to ransacking and pillaging the houses, and binding the young and middle-aged, to the number of a hundred and twenty thousand, who were driven along like sheep, to be slaves to that tyrannic prince.

Pilgrim. A base-minded tyrant, indeed!

Cleophas. But ever honoured be the memory of a descendent of his, Ptolomy Philadelphus, an excellent Prince, who not only released the Jewish captives, but, for the advancement of civil and religious knowledge, founded a library, consisting of seven hundred thousand books,

books, collected, at a vast expence, from all parts. He also sent to the High Priest Eleazar for a complete copy of the Bible, and employed seventy persons, eminent for their literature, to translate it into Greek. By this encouragement of science, Ptolomy may truly be said to have gained more real glory, than King Pyrrhus in his wars.

Pilgrim. It is delightful to hear of men, who have the cultivation of virtue and useful literature at heart, and the happiness it sheds on their lives.

Cleophas. That is very well said; and, indeed, neither Seleucus who conquered all Asia, nor Antiochus Magnus, nor Arsaces, the mighty King of the Parthians, nor Sesostris, whose victories are so vaunted by the Egyptians, nor any of those warriors who signalized themselves about this time, do I account so happy as those placid sages, who laid out their talents in reforming mankind by wise discourses; among whom Jesus, the son of Syrach, who lived at Alexandria under Ptolomy Evergetes, is not one of the least, as the volume he has left abundantly testifies; more true wisdom being found in it, than in all the compositions of Stoic, Epicurean, and Platonic philosophers, though both they, and the Pythagorean and Peripatetic, had many followers. Oh! that Israel had been suffered to live in peace! how would it have retrieved all its former calamities! how would every happiness have flourished within its borders! But now it was on both sides exposed to the ravages of the powerful Kings of Egypt and Syria, who, since the time of Alexander the Great, were perpetually at war for the sovereignty; and the sufferings of the Jews, and particularly of this city of Jeru-^{3 Maccab.} salem, are scarce to be credited: For ^{i, ii, iii, &c.} Ptolomy Philopater having defeated Antiochus Magnus, in which action sixty thousand Jews were slain, he came up to Jerusalem under a shew of devotion; but presuming to enter the temple, all the priests and people broke out into the most passionate intreaties

and lamentations; which he disregarding, was miraculously punished. This so inflamed his natural cruelty, that, by his order, many thousands of all ranks and ages were bound with cords and dragged away to Alexandria, where they were to be given up to be killed by the King's elephants. But here, as in the case of Daniel, God was pleased to interpose, and, in his unfathomable mercy, to give a very unexpected issue to the affair. The elephants would not touch the weeping Jews; and the King relented, not only setting them at liberty, but sending them home again with rich presents. The day of their return was a day of great gladness at Jerusalem, and commemorated by a stately pillar, still to be seen among the antiquities of this city.

Pilgrim. What calamities this people has passed through? I don't wonder now, that the remembrance of them should draw tears from one of your disposition.

Cleophas. Ah, Son, much more affecting histories still remain. It happened that when Janna Hyrcanus succeeded his father as Prince of Judah, and Onias was High Priest, Antiochus Epiphanes ascended the throne of Syria; this was in the hundred and sixty first year of the Grecian monarchy. This monarch had made some motions towards the conquest of Egypt, and was in a fair way of carrying his point, when letters were brought to him from Rome, enjoining him to desist and march back. Enraged at such a prey being snatched

1 Macc. i. out of his hand, he turned his arms against Jerusalem, which now was crowded with ravaging soldiers. The golden altars, the censers, the crowns, and all the other costly ornaments of the sanctuary, were confusedly thrown together and carried away. From rapine the barbarians proceeded to carnage, murdering all who came in their way. Immense was the spoil which he carried with him to Antioch; yet did not that satisfy his rancour. He was displeased with himself for not having utterly destroyed the city, and, two years after, actually sent a very numerous army, under
Apol-

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Apollonius, on that cruel service. Such a visit being quite unexpected, the inhabitants trembled at the sight of the ensigns and the sound of the martial instruments. They could unquestionably have kept him out; but, pretending peace and good will, and that his forces were designed for some other expedition, he entered the city on a sabbath day. Then came on such a scene! Immediately the soldiers fell to work with their swords and spears. Every street resounded with the cry of murder; the gutters ran with blood; wives saw their husbands expiring under repeated wounds; children were killed in the cradle, or their brains dashed out against the walls; never was such misery: And when all places were covered with dead bodies, to the number of not less than eighty thousand, and about forty thousand were bound and set apart to be sold for slaves, those barbarians set fire to the city in several places, demolished the walls and towers, and on that hill, which is called Akra, they built a citadel, placing in it a strong garrison. As this was the most dreadful calamity Jerusalem ever knew, would to God it had been the last!

Pilgrim. Are we then to hear of more calamities?

Cleophas. Alas, yes! The corruption and abolishment of religious worship, in which consisted the chief glory of Israel, above all other nations. Onias, the High Priest, a very pious man, yet treacherously murdered, left two sons, Jason and Menelaus, who quarrelling about the succession to their father's office, supplanted each other by offers of great sums to Antiochus, and engaging themselves to adopt the Pagan rites; no good was to be expected from those who had, by such base and impious means, got into the sanctuary; accordingly the immoralities of both were notorious; instead of performing so much as the ceremonial functions, they gave themselves up to diversions and merriment, the temple was prophaned, and even in the Holy of Holies was an

2 Macc. iv.

altar erected to Jupiter Olympus: The King put forth an ordinance, that there should be but one religion in the country, and whoever acted contrary to it, should suffer death. To enforce this severe ordinance, he sent an officer of a savage disposition, who, amidst many other acts of tyranny, tore the book of the Law, forbade circumcising children, forced the people to sacrifice to idols, and eat swine's flesh; men, whose age naturally claimed regard, were dragged to torturing deaths; two women were hung over the city wall, with their infants tied to their breasts, only for having circumcised them; a mother and seven sons were fried in

Cap. vi. pans for refusing to eat swine's flesh, and this inconceivable torment they went through with magnanimity and even triumph; in short,

Cap. vii. there was nothing but hanging, burning, slaughtering, and torturing; the wretch of a Governor knowing, that the more cruelties he committed, his conduct would be the more approved.

Pilgrim. In what a deplorable condition was that poor country!

Cleophas. There was no quiet or safety but in an impious hypocrisy, and acting contrary to God's holy Law; good persons fled from their homes into wildernesses, and among the hills secreting themselves in caves and pits, suffering hunger, the inclemency of the weather, and all kinds of distress; and, alas! this is even now the case of great numbers of my countrymen.

Pilgrim. I cannot blame these interruptions of overwhelming sorrow.

Cleophas. Yes, great numbers of my countrymen are groaning under the like calamities, and this often oppresses my weak age; but this I will drop for the present, and go on with the history.

Pilgrim. Was no deliverer to be found, who would rescue his country from such distress?

Cleophas. It was not to be expected. Prince Janna Hyrcanus, of the race of Judah, had been murdered; the

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the Nobles were forced into exile ; and of the priests, they who had escaped the sword were fled.

Pilgrim. Did then the Princes of Judah subsist down to this time ?

Cleophas. Yes, for Refah Mefullam, who was of royal blood, and reigned sixty six years, was succeeded by Prince Johannan, who reigned fifty-three years ; after him Judas Hyrcanus, fourteen years, Joseph seven years, Abner Semi eleven years, Mattathias Heli twenty-two years, Assar Mahat nine years, Naggit Arphaxad, ten years, Agar Eli eight years, Maslot Nahum seven years, Amos Syrach fourteen years, Mattathias Silo ten years, Joseph Arses sixty-six years, and lastly, his successor was this Janna Hyrcanus, who reigned sixteen years ; of all which the aggregate amount, including the fifty-eight years of Zorobabel's Government, make three hundred and sixty-one years, being the interval between the Babylonish Captivity and this dismal tragedy.

Pilgrim. Certainly the drift of such a procedure must have been the utter extirpating of the whole Jewish race, and of that worship which was instituted by God himself.

Cleophas. Nothing less would have been the event, without a manifest divine interposition.

Pilgrim And pray what was it ?

Cleophas. You see yonder, a mountain, a considerable way off to the North West, with some ruins on it.

Pilgrim. I observe it.

Cleophas. There formerly stood a little town, called Modin, and its Priest at that time was Mattathias, the son of Assamoneus, a man universally esteem-
ed ; his generous heart melted to see the holy 1 Macc. ii.
city destroyed, the Law trampled under foot, and his kindred and people massacred for their faithful adherence to the pure religion of their fathers. A Jew, purely as an insult to this good Priest, making an offering to idols, it incensed him to that degree, that he laid the apostate and Antiochus's officer dead at his feet ; then with his family,

family, and no inconsiderable number of persons, detesting this foreign tyranny, betook himself to the hilly parts of the desert. The soldiery, on the report of such a bold action, being immediately assembled, marched in quest of him, and the Jews making no resistance, it being the Sabbath when they were attacked, great numbers perished in caverns by the sword and fire; till, at the persuasion of Mattathias, they were brought to defend themselves on that day. And it is not at all inconsistent with religion to dispense with the strictness of the law on a very weighty exigency, the law being made for man, and not man for the law. Mattathias, after gloriously asserting the Jewish liberty against superior forces, reviving many of the sacred rites, and demolishing the idolatrous altars, was gathered to his fathers, leaving five wise and valiant sons, and the chief command to one of them, called Judas Macchabeus, as most capable of completing the good work which he had began.

Pilgrim. This must naturally be attended with great disturbances.

Cleophas. Oh, exceeding great. Levies were daily making to quell these superstitious rebels, as the ^{1 Macc. iii. iv.} Jews were called, who had dared to oppose the King's authority; but Judas, though with only a handful of men in comparison of the pagan forces, by his conduct and courage, his prayers, and firm confidence in the divine favour, gave them several defeats; and particularly he overthrew Lysias, whom Antiochus had appointed chief governor of the country, placing great confidence in his talents. The spirit of religion, with which the Jews were animated, also made them perform wonders. Flushed with successes, they marched to Jerusalem; the streets of which, covered with grass, and the burnt walls drew from them tears of indignation. They cleansed the temple, rebuilt the sanctuary, and set all things to rights with such dispatch, that on the twenty fifth of December the Dedication was solemnized,

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lemnized, with all the pomp the state of their affairs permitted; and, to this day, Judas's achievements are commemorated on a stated anniversary. Afterwards the combined armies of several heathen people took the field under Timotheus, an Ammonite general, and of great renown in war. But Cap. v. what are skill, courage, and numbers, against divine assistance? Judas dispersed them with great slaughter, and reduced several of their principal places.

Pilgrim. But how did King Antiochus relish this?

Cleophas. He had marched into Persia, in hopes of becoming master of the vast treasures of that kingdom; but miscarrying in his design, and Cap. vi. receiving such bad news from Judæa, of the defeats of his armies and the loss of many cities, it threw him into the most frantic rage, that, as his chariot was by his command driving furiously, on his return to go against the Jews, he fell down on the ground, which was followed by a loathsome and incurable disease; and after lingering in stench and torture, he died at Babylon under an agonizing sense that his disease was the punishment of his impieties. But he left a son, named Antiochus Eupator.

Pilgrim. Who, I suppose, prosecuted the war against God's people.

Cleophas. Yes, and with no small force. At first he came with an army of a hundred thousand foot, twenty thousand horse, and thirty two elephants equipped in a warlike manner, and laid siege to the castle of Bethsura, the ruins of which are still to be seen on yonder rock; yet with all his superiority he could not get the better of Judas, but by surreptitious means he stole into the city, where he lorded it at will. Soon after, intending for Cap. vii. Antioch, he and Lyfias, his favourite general, were murdered by the contrivance of Demetrius, who sent Bacchides into Judæa; and he, in conjunction with the apostate Alcimus, did a great deal of mischief. Afterwards Nicanor, at the head of a number

ber of desperadoes, poured forth blasphemies against the temple, and vowed not to leave a Jew alive; but his army was cut to pieces by Judas, and his head and right hand hanged up facing the temple. Thus were lawless tyrants caught in their own machinations, and Israel had a short interval of quiet.

Cleophas. What measures, in the mean time, did the victorious Prince Judas take?

Cleophas. The Roman arms being in great reputation, and he continually harrassed by the King of
 Cap. viii. Assyria, he thought it advisable to secure their powerful protection, by entering into an alliance with them: For he considered, that no nation had been able to stand before them; that about sixty years before, they had, after three signal victories, entirely reduced the Gauls, a very martial people; that fifty years before, Scipio, a Roman commander, had overrun the greater part of Spain, and, ten years after, brought the powerful republic of Carthage to sue for peace; that about thirty years before, Glabrius, another Roman general, had humbled the arrogant Antiochus the Great, that he sent hostages to Rome; and Popilius had driven Antiochus the Illustrious out of Egypt: Particularly the achievements of Paulus Emilius were fresh in every one's mind; his taking prisoner Perseus, King of Macedonia; and reducing under the dominion of Rome that kingdom, and successively all Greece, once above all other nations famous for arts and arms. On this motive, so specious to human prudence, Judas concluded a league with the Romans; but, as if this combination with a pagan power displeased God, Judas
 lived not to see any good effects of his po-
 Cap. ix. licy, being soon after killed in an unfor-
 1-23. tunate battle against Bacchides.

Pilgrim. The loss of such a man must have been a heavy stroke to the poor Jews.

Cleophas. Oh, there is no expressing their grief; and the consequences were very bad. The heathens and apostates

apostates seemed to strive to out-do each other in outrages of all kinds. The latter daily increased. The impious Alcimus was invested with the Pontificate, which he further profaned by his deportment. On this Onias withdrew into Egypt, where, by the King's permission, he built a temple at Heliopolis after a model of that at Jerusalem; in which, though not quite consistent with the divine command, Onias, the state of the times considered, thought he acted not amiss. Thus was the Priesthood polluted, and the Jews almost as miserable as ever. However, this storm also blew over, Alcimus dying of a torturing disease; and

Jonathan, succeeding his brother Judas as commander in chief, forced Bacchides to come to terms. Farther, Alexander, raised to the throne of Syria, having vanquished Demetrius, made Jonathan High Priest, and put him in possession of the Jewish kingdom.

ver. 28—73.

From this time matters began to mend with the Jews, the several competitors for the Syrian monarchy paying great regard to Jonathan, and courting his friendship. In these favourable times he rebuilt the walls of Jerusalem, and improved its defences; but after a prosperous government of seventeen years, he by treachery fell into the hands of Tryphon, who caused him to be murdered.

Cap. x, xi.

Cap. xii, xiii.

Pilgrim. Such calamities extremely affect me.

Cleophas. That argues an humane heart; yet these were limited to our Nation. But your sympathy would be still stronger were I to relate to you how the splendid city of Corinth was laid in ashes by a Roman army; and how the forces of the same victorious state set the famous Carthage on fire, and that it continued blazing no less than seventeen days, the poor inhabitants, to the number of above fifty thousand men, besides women and children, flying away, destitute of every necessary of life. Then what a terrible affair was that of Numantium in Spain, where the inhabitants, after slaughtering one another, set fire to the city, and the

the remainder died by their own swords or perished in the flames; a strange instance of the force of human passions.

Pilgrim. My chief curiosity is concerning Israel.

Cap. xiii. *Cleophas.* The worthy Jonathan was succeeded by his brother Simon, both a High Priest and Prince of the people, and as their dispositions and conduct were similar, so the end of Simon bore some resemblance to that of Jonathan, being treacherously murdered at a banquet by Ptolomy, his sister's husband; but the Priesthood was conferred on his son Johannes Hyrcanus.

Pilgrim. How did he behave?

Cleophas. During his father's life he totally routed Cendebeus, a General of Antiochus Soter, afterwards delivered Jerusalem from a very dangerous siege, and by gifts prevailed on the said Antiochus to desist from all hostilities, and permit the Jews the free exercise of their religion. Being in want of a large sum of money, he opened David's sepulchre and took out of it three thousand talents. Antiochus Soter being slain in an action against Demetrius, and the war breaking out again, Hyrcanus had considerable success, raised to the ground the Samaritan temple on Mount Gerizim, where it had, to the great offence of the Jews, stood above two hundred years. He also kept the Idumeans in awe, and renewed the treaty with the Romans; and the long contests of the two Antiochus's, one surnamed Gryphus, the other Cicizenus, for the crown of Syria, leaving Johannes unmolested from that quarter, he went and laid siege to Samaria, which having taken after a most dreadful famine, he totally demolished it, not leaving a house standing.

Pilgrim. The Jews seem to have had a good time of it under Africanus.

Cleophas. There was always some mixture of calamity; for whilst he was engaged in the siege of Samaria, Antiochus Cicizenus very unexpectedly made
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an inroad, sacking town and country and putting every body to the sword, that in the very worst times it was little worse. Another unhappy circumstance was, that, in the decline of his life, the common people conceived a bitter hatred against him.

Pilgrim. Aye! hate a governor of his abilities, and who did so many things, with which they could not but be well pleased? That is something strange.

Cleophas. There had lately arisen among the Jews three sects, the Pharisees, Essenes, and Sadducees; of whom the Pharisees were held in most esteem by the commonalty; and, being men of parts and address, turned and winded the passions of the multitude which way they pleased. Now Hyrcanus had at first professed himself a Pharisee, but afterwards became so zealous for Sadduceism, that he abolished the institutes and observances of the Pharisees; which drew on him all the rancour of that faction, and their adherents. However, he died in peace, after ruling thirty one years, and among impartial people was esteemed a valuable Prince.

Pilgrim. Did the Jewish affairs continue in a good posture?

Cleophas. Their principality became changed to a monarchy; Aristobulus, eldest son of Hyrcanus, assuming the title of King, with all the ensigns of regality, crown, sceptre, &c. but within a year he died a miserable death, amidst the piercing reproaches of conscience for the murder of his brother Antigonus, whom he had caused to be privately made away with. His widow Alexandra's first step was to send for a brother of his, Alexander Jamme, out of prison, and, marrying him, made him King; but the twenty seven years of his reign were attended with many misfortunes and disgraces, the usual appendages of flagrant wickedness: For the country was continually harrassed by the contending Kings of Syria, and especially by Ptolemy Lathuras, who, being master of the isle of Cyprus,

Cyprus, made a descent in Judæa, and waged a most sanguinary war against Alexander. After a defeat, in which thirty thousand Jews were killed on the spot, to strike the greater terror he committed unheard of cruelties in the villages and towns of Galilee, causing women and children to be cut to pieces, their shivering limbs thrown into boiling caldrons, and forcing other Jews to eat them, under pain of the like death.

Pilgrim. Unheard-of cruelties, indeed!

Cleophas. Yet I question whether Alexander Jamme was not equally inhuman; for the city of Gaza, having surrendered to him, the inhabitants were put to the sword, five hundred of the principal men murdered in the temple of Apollo, and the city destroyed. These cruelties the Jews were so far from approving, that they ejected him from the priesthood, and in a tumult, during the feast of Tabernacles, he was pelted with citrons; an affront which he cruelly revenged, putting above six thousand of the inhabitants to the sword, without any regard to that season of holy festivity. But certainly never was such barbarity known, as his causing eight hundred Jews of the opposite party to be crucified, and whilst they were on the cross their wives and children to be put to death before their eyes; imagine, if possible, the agonies on both sides, and the innocent children stretching out their arms to their excruciated fathers; and as an insult to their sufferings, he sat on only rioting at a voluptuous banquet. These are proceedings so extremely horrid, that Alexander, for inhumanity, may well be ranked with the above Ptolomy, or even with Sylla the Roman, who, at this time, having driven his rival, Marius, out of Rome, made a most tyrannic use of his superiority, that full a hundred thousand persons, and many of high rank and eminent merits, were slain by his order. If the number of this massacre exceeded that of Alexander, its circumstances are less cruel; besides, Alexander was a Jew, acquainted with the merciful
injunctions

injunctions of God, whereas the others were only unenlightened Pagans.

Pilgrim. What bloody times; into what dreadful confusions was the Jewish Kingdom fallen!

Cleophas. Is there then any thing strange in God's having fore-ordained another Kingdom, yet to be originated from the stem of Judah; a Kingdom of Grace, Peace, Mercy, Benignity, and every heavenly Virtue; of Redemption and Solacement to the oppressed; and of which his Prophets had been influenced to give notice?

Pilgrim. Very far from being strange. But where is this kingdom?

Cleophas. That we will talk of, when we are come to the period of this.

Pilgrim. As you please.

Cleophas. That Alexander left two sons, Hyrcanus and Aristobulus. The Queen-mother made Hyrcanus High Priest, and promoted the Pharisees to all offices of power. On her decease, which was in the ninth year of her reign, the two brothers quarrelled, and Aristobulus made war on Hyrcanus for the succession; which rupture proved the cause, under divine appointment, that the Sceptre of Judah was transferred from the Jews to the Pagans; and this, in no very long term, drew on the last excision of this miserable city, and of which the sad monuments are now before our eyes.

Pilgrim. Concerning this I should be glad of more particular information.

Cleophas. There was a crafty artful man, one Antipater, of Idumæan extraction, who envious that Aristobulus, contrary to all right and reason, should enjoy the crown, though with the assent of Hyrcanus, instigated the latter to attempt the recovery of his right, and entered into a league with Aretas, an Arabian Prince, who, coming to Jerusalem, laid siege to the Temple, in which were Aristobulus, and the whole body of the priests. It was a shocking sight to see brother

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fighting against brother, with the most envenomed animosity; but still much more shocking, that both should join in stoning to death the good Onias, (whose prayer, in a time of long drought, had brought down rain,) and this only because, instead of siding with either party, and excommunicating its enemies, he exhorted them to unity. But a destructive tempest of hail, the more extraordinary in this serene climate, indicated God's displeasure at this murder. In the mean time Scaurus, a Roman commander under Pompey the Great, gained such advantages in Syria, that the Arabian army withdrew from Jerusalem: And on Pompey's coming to Damascus, he was attended by Envoys from the two brothers, with very rich presents, to procure his Decree in favour of their respective principals; but Aristobulus, seeing things like to go against him, betrayed some intentions of resistance. On which Pompey marched to Jerusalem; and having taken the Temple sword in hand, a terrible carnage ensued, in which above ten thousand Jews perished; not a few killed each other; and several threw themselves down from the pinnacles of the Temple. Farther, what never any foreign Kings had done, Pompey went into the Holy of Holies, but without offering to do the least damage in it; and having brought Jerusalem and other cities under tribute, he carried away Aristobulus as a captive, leaving Hyrcanus High Priest. These were the commencements of the total subjection and dispersion of my countrymen.

Pilgrim. But tell me, Father: How came the Romans to be so powerful, as to carry all before them, even in this country?

Cleophas. Why, their progress was like a flood, breaking down dike after dike; for, having subdued Macedonia and Carthage, as I said before, they extended themselves East and West. The first who fell under their arms was Jugurtha, an African King. Afterwards Marius vanquished the Cymbrians; Ser-

torius

torius performed wonders in Spain; the above-mentioned Pompey reduced Sicily, the celebrated Mithridates, King of Pontus, together with Armenia, Persia, Media, Syria, and all these parts, dethroning Tigranes, the last of the race of the Antiochus's, or descendents of Alexander the Great. And whilst Pompey over-ran the East, no less successful was Cæsar in the West, bringing under the Roman dominion France, Germany, Belgia, England, and other countries. Thus, as the Prophet Daniel had foretold, began the fourth Monarchy, on the extinction of the third.

Pilgrim. My curiosity is satisfied as to the Romans; now we will return to your countrymen.

Cleophas. Know, Son, that this city has since undergone divers calamities. When Crassus, a Roman general, took the field against the Parthians, he plundered the Temple of all the gold left by Pompey, besides an ingot of the same valuable metal of three hundred pounds weight. Afterwards, Pompey being worsted by Cæsar, the above-mentioned Antipater, by his intrigues with that Emperor's favourites, procured Hyrcanus to be confirmed in the Pontificate, and himself to be appointed Prince, or chief Governor of Judæa. His chief study was to promote his sons, and, with the produce of the taxes, to secure the friendship of the Great, and men of interest. On his death, Herod and Phaselus, his two sons, were, by Mark Antony, made Tetrarchs, or Kings of a fourth part of the country. Aristobulus, whom we have spoken of before, had been murdered, and left a son named Antigonus; who, prevailing on the Parthians to assist him in asserting his pretended right to the kingdom, came with a very large army, declaring that he would drive out Herod and Hyrcanus, and seat himself on the throne. To have seen the wretchedness of Jerusalem at this juncture would have melted a heart of stone. Some declared for Antigonus; others adhered to Hyrcanus and Herod. The banners were were displayed, the trumpets

founded an alarm, and all parts were filled with the tumult and horrors of war. The King's palace, of which the white marble ruins still shew themselves, was furiously assailed, that the arrows on both sides flew like hail; but the hottest action was in the plain, then a market-place. Antigonus had been driven into the Temple; and some houses, which Herod had garrisoned, were set on fire. It being the day of Pentecost, some thousands of country people mastered the city, and forced Herod to betake himself to the palace; whence, however, he made a sally, killing a great many of his enemies. In the mean time up came the Parthians, who were all horse, and, under colour of being mediators, got Hyrcanus and Phaselus into their power; but Herod, relinquishing the kingdom to Antigonus, escaped into Arabia through a thousand dangers, and thence, by the way of Egypt, got to Rome.

Pilgrim. The confusions of the world!

Cleophas. Then came to pass what the Gen. xlix. 10. Patriarch Jacob had prophesied, about seventeen hundred years before, That the Sceptre should be taken from Judah, which appellation now included all Israel; for Herod soliciting aid from the Romans, the Senate appointed him King over Judæa; and this was five hundred years after the Babylonish captivity, when the Asmonean family, of which Mattathias was the first, had reigned a hundred and thirty years.

Pilgrim. This, then, was the time for the promised Chief to make his appearance.

Cleophas. Yes; the adorable Chief, who has subdued all things under him, without sword or spear, but with Truth alone, as of all things the strongest.

Pilgrim. His appearance must have been very desirable. But how did Herod get into possession of his kingdom?

Cleophas. Not without great bloodshed, as I have heard my father say; and he was an eye-witness of it.

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The whole country was a lamentable scene of distress. The Parthians, and Antigonus's mercenaries, had pilaged all the neighbourhood of Jerusalem; Galilee swarmed with assassins and robbers; the frontiers were lined with soldiery; Herod enters with a numerous Roman host, and overruns the country, all the cities and towns opening their gates, without daring to stand a siege. At Jerusalem, however, he was repulsed with great slaughter; but, reinforced by Sosius, a Roman commander, he made a second attempt, and Antigonus's adherents defended themselves with the greatest vigour and bravery, till, after several assaults, both city and temple were carried. Now the Roman soldiery ran through the streets like enraged lions, sabreing all they met, women, children, and aged people; so bloody was the massacre, that Herod, cruel as he was, no longer able to bear the cries and groans, and the sight of streets all strewed with dead bodies, ordered the sword to be sheathed: Antigonus, though he asked his pardon in the lowest postures of humiliation, was sent bound to Mark Antony, one of the chief men among the Romans, who, to gratify Herod, caused his head to be struck off; thus it was not with a little blood that Herod purchased the kingdom.

Pilgrim. A dear price for any thing in this short life.

Cleophas. And in all his reign he never had a day's quiet; besides his being several times in danger of his life from the Emperor Augustus, his friend Antony being now no more, and likewise from those of his own family, he was continually haunted with jealousies and fears; for he knew himself to be hated by the Jews, as by his birth having no right to the Kingdom; and from this fear of them he committed many particular murders, destroying the whole Asmonean family, not sparing even his own wife, Mariamne, nor her mother Alexandra, nor her brother Aristobulus, nor so much as Hyrcanus, now greatly

advanced in years, and to whom he, in some measure, owed his royalty; nor his own sons Alexander and Aristobulus; and even on his death-bed, so far was his inhumanity from relenting, that he ordered his eldest son, Antipater, to be dispatched. Nature, indeed, seemed to have threatened him that his Kingdom was drawing towards its end, and another Prince at hand, which made him stick at nothing to secure himself. Any whisper of a King, set him in a tremble; he had every where his spies and emissaries to give information of any practices against him, or whether any King was born among the Jews, as was strongly expected; but all his vigilance and artifices proved abortive, for the wisdom of God caught him in his own craftiness; this King he so much feared, he imagined was to be of the Asmonean family, whereas, he came from the tribe of Judah; he looked out for him among the noble families, whereas his parents were of the commonalty; truly all worldly precaution, cunning, and activity avail nothing against the divine appointments.

Pilgrim. This Herod was rather a monster than a King; but I perceive, by your discourse, that now was the time when the King, who had been promised so long before, was to be born; and very desirous am I of being acquainted with his history; yet, for the present, will trouble you no longer; the day, indeed, is not shut in, but I am for breaking up early, that, being aged, you may sufficiently refresh yourself, and so be the more revived to-morrow, rather than tire you now, and thus you will be the less fit to enter on a subject, which, by what I can apprehend, is too interesting to be run over superficially, and may require some previous recollection.

Cleophas. That is well considered, Son; go then in peace, and consider what you have heard, that the sequel may be the more clear and instructive to you.

Pilgrim. I hope I shall; good night, my very kind Father.

DIA-

DIALOGUE III.

PART the THIRD.

Containing the space of 70 years, or the Life of CHRIST, with the Travels and Acts of the Apostles, to the Destruction.

Cleophas. I Should have appointed this day's meeting in another place, but this being the most elevated, and affording the widest prospect, which will frequently be of service, for pointing out to you towns and places, I omitted it; otherwise my house would have been very convenient.

Pilgrim. For my part, I desire no better place than this; here is nothing to hinder us. It is shady and pleasant, and, as you say, we have an extensive prospect on all sides; then it is, of itself, an assemblage of antiquities, and, as such, refreshes the memory, confirms faith, and animates zeal; for I truly tell you, that what I heard from you yesterday, and what I have observed on this hill, afford me many precious and elevating reflections; the particulars of your narrative are continually present to my mind, and this makes me rather more eager to hear the sequel, as the one without the other must be something imperfect.

Cleophas. Very true. But on what did your last reflections turn, that we may the better know where to begin?

Pilgrim. I was, among other things, wondering that Herod should be caught in his own craftiness, and this King born without his knowing any thing of the matter. Was it, then, conducted so secretly? Was it also unknown among the commonalty?

Cleophas. Why, this birth was not unlike the manna falling in the wilderness; every body saw it, and none

Luke i. 57. knew what to make of it. For a long time it was secretly bruited among the people, that a Priest's wife was, in her old age, delivered of a son, and that great things were expected from him. As it was chiefly the hilly country where this report prevailed, and the parents were of small account, little notice was taken of it.

Pilgrim. And this was the promised child.

Cleophas. No, no; yet was this birth not without some wonderful circumstances; for it was known to every one, that the father had, for questioning the possibility of it, been dumb nine months, *ver. 20-64.* till, to the great joy of his family and neighbours, at his wife's delivery of this son, his tongue was loosened. And, what added a dignity and importance to this son was, that his coming had been predicted four hundred years before in a canonical Prophecy. The hearts of many devout and reflecting persons rejoiced with exceeding joy, persuaded that this was the morning Star preceding the much more glorious Sun of Peace and Righteousness. But this was known only to the truly devout, who then were groaning under oppression and contempt. As to Herod's household, and the great ones, they were taken up with the objects of luxury and pride, with banquets and games; their heads were full of the grandeur of the Romans; and, confident in the favour of that irresistible power, they made a jest of the talk of the common people, who sometimes dropped hints of an approaching Redeemer, whom they longed for, and diligently attended to every thing which afforded any hope of his advent. Some had their eye on David's family, the Prophets having said many great things concerning it. This to others seemed an idle expectation, that family being totally reduced and extinguished, that the very Scribes would not so much as hazard any conjectures. They indeed said, that the accomplishment of all the Prophecies concerning the Messiah was at hand; but that ambition,

ambition, and a lust of rule, blinded the eyes and incapacitated the mind for the discernment of spiritual things : And to this not a little contributed the divisions of the Pharisees, Saducees, and Essenes, all courting the King's favour, who availed himself of their variances, his scope being to crush one by the other ; in which he succeeded ; that, by degrees, they became deprived of every branch of liberty. Thus the understandings of the generality were so dulled and darkened, that they turned the deaf ear to any report of this Redeemer's coming, unless supported by a great force ; yet a pretended Messiah, with a very numerous army of adherents, had been totally defeated. There was, however, a very pious couple, descended from the line of David, but now in a low condition ; the husband, though of royal extraction, being only a carpenter. He was affianced Matth. i.
16, &c. to a virgin named Mary, related to the mother of the child abovementioned ; and they, being of pious dispositions, took an exceeding delight in each other's conversation. They used to examine the Prophets together ; to lament the wretchedness of the times, the neglect of the divine promises, and the prevalent ignorance and confusion. Their comfort was, that nothing of those glorious Prophecies should fall to the ground. These subjects also were discussed by the godly, but in retired places and at midnight, lest they might have been observed, the tyrant having every where his spies. In the mean time, God, who carries his decrees into execution against every human opposition, sent an Angel of the first order, Luke i.
26, &c. to signify to Mary this long expected and inestimable birth. The only person, to whom the devout Virgin made known this message, was her religious kinswoman above-mentioned. Their reciprocal joy, no more than the spiritual irradiations with which they were favoured, ver. 32. are not to be expressed, so that whole nights could they

they have passed in reflecting on God's wonderful dealings, did not time limit all things.

Pilgrim. Such general ignorance is surprizing. I wonder also that nothing appeared to disperse it, and awaken men's attention; but it is to be hoped things did not continue so?

Cleophas. The great and wealthy continued as blind as ever, being all taken up with their selfish views; one to attain a higher rank, another to settle his son in some lucrative or honourable employment; whilst the merchants, tradesfolks, and farmers, eagerly pushed their several businesses, rejoicing in the peace which, at that time, all parts of the world enjoyed: For advice came that the temple of Janus at Rome had been shut, which was never done but in an universal peace, and every body gave themselves up to eating and drinking and making merry, without any apprehension of a change of times. But, behold, within half a year breaks out a fresh report. A company of shepherds relate, that as they were tending their flocks in

Luke ii.
8—17.

the night, Angels had appeared to them, telling them to go to Bethlehem: (You may easily see it; there it is, on that mountain, to the southward, about six miles off, close by that tower, which is called Eder;) they farther affirmed, that the Heavens were opened, that they saw things which they had no words to express, that there was great joy among the Angels, and that they had never heard any musick in the least comparable to the Angels hymns. On their coming to Bethlehem, they found a young woman, sitting with an air of great tenderness, by a very beautiful child, which was lain in a manger, and behind her stood a grave well-looking old man; they were both of the lineage of David, though living at Nazareth. This was the Child, Son, this was the long promised, the long expected Child. The shepherds, who could have no interest in it, saw him, and could not forbear relating the wonders they had

had been witnesses of. Now some readily gave credit to their sayings, others were at a loss; however, it occasioned a great wondering. This reminds me, that my father Cleophas, who had gone to Jerusalem, on account of the Feast of the Dedication, at his return brought home this good news; I was then eleven years of age, and, though it be above a century ago, I sufficiently remember the circumstances.

Pilgrim. You inflame my curiosity more and more. How happened they to be at Bethlehem. Were they on a visit, or on settling the division of an inheritance?

Cleophas. Not they. They were people of little or no substance. The man, as I said before, was a working carpenter. They were come there pursuant to an edict of the emperor Augustus, Luke ii.
1—7. requiring every one to make his appearance, and pay his cess, in the town of his tribe. In the mean while, by God's particular appointment, the time of her delivery came on, that the sayings of the Prophets might be fulfilled; it being now the thirty-fourth year of the reign of Herod, the forty-first of that of Augustus, and the six-hundred and seventh year after the Babylonish captivity. Daniel's Seventy Weeks were now expired, that every considering person could not but suppose the deliverance of Israel to be very near at hand; and though a thick veil hung before the eyes of the principal men, yet others plainly discerned some scattered gleams of that resplendent sun which was rising, and the morning star, its harbinger, already glittering above the horizon. The affirmations of the shepherds of Bethlehem being little heeded, and by many looked on as only an idle tale of stupid rustics, about six weeks after another rumour spreads. There was at Jerusalem a godly old man, named Simeon; also a devout widow and Prophetess, named Anna. These, having seen ver. 25—38. the child in the Temple, were persuaded of his being the Redeemer of Israel. This made some noise, and was by

by many heard with joy; for Simeon, in virtue of his hope, had departed this life very chearfully, prophesying many wonderful things of this child.

Pilgrim. Did this reach Herod's ears?

Cleophas. None ventured to open the matter to him, fearing his rage. However, he got some air of it, and this filled him with secret agitations, not knowing how to proceed, family combustions hindering him from applying a speedy remedy to every thing. He even went to Rome, with a violent complaint against his two sons, Alexander and Aristobulus; then hastened back, and brought them to a very solemn trial before a hundred and fifty Nobles, whom, after many heavy charges against his sons, he hypocritically intreated for the acquitting of them; but two Roman senators, who sat as Presidents, and had been clandestinely practised on, sentenced them to die. Accordingly, being carried to Samaria, they were strangled. The tyrant had his hands too full with his own family, to examine into any thing else; and he was so habituated to torturing, that many persons, totally ignorant of any crime, were put to death, and his courtiers he knew to be such a set as to deserve no credit or confidence. Thus was the wretched Herod a continual prey to tumultuous fears and uncertain suspicions about the loss of his kingdom, in the mean time knowing little or nothing of this dreaded birth.

Pilgrim. Wonderful is the secret working of Providence.

Cleophas. But about a year after, a report of a King's being born became more current than ever.

Matth. ii.
1, 2. Some Magi of the East, acquainted with the writings of the Prophets, and particularly of Daniel, and being also expert astronomers, had observed a new star to arise over the land of Judæa; and reflecting on the import of this phenomenon, they came to Jerusalem, with a great train of attendants, camels, and other beasts of burden, and

and addressed themselves to Herod, to know where the new-born King of the Jews was. The old tyrant turned pale at this question; and many who heard it were greatly troubled, fearing some bloody revolution was in agitation, of which they had seen many instances. Others again, who were not of Herod's faction, or alienated by his tyrannical procedures, rejoiced in the appearance of a change. Immediately the council was assembled; the High Priests and Scribes, together with all who were of any note, for interpreting the Scriptures, received orders to attend; and the Books being opened, after much ventilation of the several texts in point, they delivered it as their unanimous opinion, that this miraculous birth was to be at Bethlehem. Herod, concealing his blood-thirsty wrath, sent the Magi to Bethlehem, in hopes, through their report, to come at the child, saying, that he also would go and do homage to him. But the Magi, after worshiping the infant in which the Divinity was concealed, and presenting gold, incense, and myrrh, they, by God's direction, left Herod in his ignorance, taking their way home through Arabia. Little minded they the burning sands they had to pass over, talking all the way on the comeliness of the smiling child, the meekness and affability of the mother, the courteous gravity of the old man, and the particular providence which manifestly watched over them; which gave them such a firm assurance of the certainty and momentousness of this event, that they did not in the least repent of their long journey, which, forward and backward, was not less than five hundred miles.

Pilgrim. That God should make known this birth, in such distant countries! Wonderful goodnets!

Cleophas. He was pleased to indicate it east and west, all the statues in the Capitol of Rome falling down in one night; and Augustus, consulting the celebrated Oracle

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at Delphos, on this alarming accident, could get no other answer, than *that the Hebrew child had imposed silence on it*; which so struck that Prince, that, at his return to Rome, he erected an altar in the Capitol to the honour of the First-born Son of God: And, as if by divine impulse, he would not from that time be termed *Dominus*, or Lord; and though nobody then knew the cause of this humility, yet it afterwards appeared to be owing to the Emperor's consciousness, that the Lord of Lords was come into the world.

Pilgrim. What a high title, Father, you give that child!

Cleophas. No higher, not so high, Son, as appertains to him; for this is he whom from eternity God had foreseen, and had promised from the beginning of things, whose appearance Adam and Noah, doubtless, mentioned to you; who has been expected from generation to generation, the Preserver, the Saviour, the Reconciler of the whole world, the theme of all the Prophets, and the comfort of Israel.

Pilgrim. Now I perceive it was this which made you weep so often.

Cleophas. It was; it was for this elect Lamb of God, which though so pure, so innocent!—

Pilgrim. Father, the history you have entered on, I conclude, from your emotions, to be very interesting; yet, as it may likewise be of some length, order and method will be proper; I have also, with your leave, a question or two before you proceed any farther—

Cleophas. — was put to a most ignominious, and cruel death in this city; which horrid crime involved Jerusalem, and the whole Jewish people, now before your eyes: But this you will better understand, when I shall have acquainted you with his descent; for as to the lineage of David, that is a very minute article, he is the only begotten Son of God, having no other father than God, born of an immaculate Virgin, by the influence of the Holy Spirit: Oh, Son, his essence
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is incomprehensible, and his generation no words can explain; and how should man, a worm, unfold the dignity of him, who is without beginning, is the eternal Reason or Word; but having seen his operations, and the glimmerings of his effulgence, I can speak of them, though very inadequately.

Pilgrim. These are amazing things, indeed; but I must return to Herod. How did he act on hearing no more of the Magi?

Cleophas. He flew into a flame, and rage increasing his natural inhumanity, he called for his guards, and not knowing the house ver. 16. where Joseph and Mary lived, he ordered them to go without delay, and slay all children under two years, within Bethlehem, and its precincts, thinking thus to make sure work of it, and cut off this infant King, which caused such fermentations. But divine Providence, to which all things are open, in a dream, warned Joseph of the child's danger, ver. 13, 14, 15. and directed him to escape without delay, and flee into Egypt; which he did, and went to Her-mopolis, a town between two and three hundred miles distant from Bethlehem.

Pilgrim. What agonies must the mothers at Bethlehem have been in, on seeing the soldiers come to put that barbarous order in execution!

Cleophas. At first they knew not what the matter was; whether Herod was for making war against the Arabians, or had some other design in view, till the ruthless murderers fell on the little children, dashing them against the stones, stabbing them, or tearing them limb from limb: Then imagine the shrieks and lamentations; the women wildly running about to save their dear infants, throwing themselves on their knees, begging to spare their lives; some offering themselves to be killed in lieu of their children; but it all availed nothing; the children were snatched from the mothers arms, and not a few killed in the cradle and at the breast,

breast, for the King's command was to be executed with all possible strictness; many went about to save themselves by flight, but the ways were beset; not one infant was to escape, that, among the rest, this presumptive King might also be removed out of the way; for as on this account the King's children themselves were not to be spared, what regard was to be expected by the commonalty! In a word, never was a more moving spectacle seen, than now in Bethlehem and its neighbourhood, the mangled bodies of hundreds of innocent children, and mothers abandoning themselves to the most furious transports of inconsolable grief.

Pilgrim. What monstrous cruelty! I wonder, the Jews could bear with such a tyrant.

Cleophas. What could they do, they were a conquered people, besides, in other things, it must be owned, he zealously consulted the public welfare; he cleared the country of banditti, by which it was much infested; to procure corn for the publick use in a time of scarcity, he pledged his own jewels; he built several considerable places as Sebaste, before called Samaria, standing in the middle of a very fine fruitful country, which he parcelled out, and generously divided it among the people. Cesarea, a sea-port, before called Stratos Tower, he rebuilt to very great advantage in honour of the Emperor, also Antipatris in commemoration of his father; but particularly, I must tell you, that it was he who built that splendid costly Temple, where you see those lofty ruins; he begun it in the eighteenth year of his reign, pulling down that of Zorobabel, which had stood five hundred years. It was entirely of a very white and hard stone, and, like the hill, highest in the middle, as the ruins still shew. Ten thousand chosen artificers, and a thousand Priests were employed on it eight years; then were added to it some outworks, which also took up some years. In honour of his old patron Mark Antony, he built a grand castle, of which you may still see the broken angles of the

the walls on the north west part of the same hill. Then by his encouragements, the country which had been desolated in the wars, and lay waste, was every where cultivated with great improvements, for the soil must not be judged of by the present appearance of things. It produces of itself vines, olives, figs, pomegranates, citrons, and other fruits; and the land, by having lain fallow being the more forward and luxuriant in its products, was soon brought to make a very rich appearance. All which several public-spirited actions, in some measure palliated the horror of Herod's enormities, and reconciled people to his government.

Pilgrim. I find, by your account, that he did not want for worldly policy, though little acquainted with heavenly wisdom.

Cleophas. Little, indeed; like all who desire earthly things before those of Heaven; whereas the heavenly Monarch, instead of possessing an earthly kingdom, was driven like a fugitive, with his poor parents, into Egypt. Yet wanted he not celestial melody and spiritual solacements; and much happier was he in the ministrations of angels, than Herod, who, amidst all his musick, banqueting, and entertainments, laboured under a very torturing indisposition.

Pilgrim. And what was the end of this unhappy King? for unhappy I must call every wicked man, whatever be his station.

Cleophas. The divine vengeance followed him close; for the heir of the kingdom, Antipater, attempted to take him off by poison. The court was full of lamentation; his friends shuddered at a change of government; and he, with all the gestures of despair, ordered Antipater to be thrown into prison. Afterwards, impatient of the pain and loathsomeness of his distemper, which preyed on his entrails, and no medicines could remove or abate, he was for putting an end to his life with a knife, with which he was paring an apple. Antipater, at hearing this, could not repress his joy, which cost him his life. Thus he, who had deprived

so many mothers of their sons, in his last moments shed the blood of his own, and inflicted on his own son that death which he intended against the Son of God. Five days after, his furious soul left his diseased body, thus ending his life in the thirty seventh year of his reign, the holy Jesus being now three years old.

Pilgrim. And thus the faithful Jews were freed from a sad tyrant.

Cleophas. True; but not from tyranny.

Pilgrim. Say you so, Father?

Cleophas. Yes, and with much cause; for though Archelaus, as a son of Herod, was to succeed to the kingdom, several competitors arose, he being then attending on the Emperor at Rome, and this was attended with great combustions. Others strove to come at Herod's treasures, and these were opposed by a third party; whilst a fourth declared for nothing less than a total change of the constitution, civil and religious. In short, all places were full of clashings and tumults. Once, at the feast of the Passover, there was a strong insurrection against Archelaus, and the stones flew from all sides on his soldiers; but this cost three thousand Jews their lives: And the following Pentecost, (I may well remember it, for I was then fourteen years of age,) both the Temple and the King's palace ran with blood; for Sabinus, a Roman, attempting to pillage the King's treasure, and the sacred moneys deposited in the Temple, the people took up arms, and assaulted him in three separate bodies. The contest was extremely bloody, and that august city a field of battle; and, what increased the horror, the tower of Phaselus took fire. Some leaped into the flames, some fell on their own swords, others were forcing an escape; till at length Varus, the Roman Governor, appeased this horrible uproar, which had been productive of so much bloodshed. Archelaus now returned from Rome, but with less power than his father; only Judæa and Samaria being assigned to him, and the other parts of the kingdom

kingdom parcelled out as Principalities among his brothers.

Pilgrim. But how was it, in the mean time, with the promised child, whose parents had fled with him into Egypt?

Cleophas. He, from his infancy, gave extraordinary proofs of a most amiable disposition, so as to raise admiration in all who saw him. As for Joseph and Mary, they were such patterns of virtue, courtesy, and good nature, that the people of Hermopolis could have wished them to settle among them; and had Hermes Trismegistus, the founder of the city, been living, I make no doubt but that, like the Eastern Magi, he would have done homage to the child and made rich presents to the parents, and urged them to have continued there. But what would it have signified? For no sooner was Joseph informed of Herod's death by an Angel, than he set out, with his wife and the precious child, on his return to Bethlehem; but hearing that Archelaus played the tyrant no less than his father, he took another way, and went into Galilee, which was under Antipas, and abode at Nazareth, the town of his fathers.

Pilgrim. That, I perceive, must have been a journey of some length.

Cleophas. You may well think what inconveniences they must have undergone after leaving Hermopolis, in travelling through so sultry a country as Egypt to Pelusium; then the fatigue, thirst, and other distresses in the sandy, barren wilderness, not to mention the apprehension of falling into the hands of robbers, and the ravenousness of the wild beasts, whose howlings added to the terror of the night. Sometimes they had a steep mountain to ascend, after that a deep valley; sometimes a wood, and this succeeded by a heath, where the parching sand must have been exceeding troublesome both to themselves and the ass which carried their necessaries; and, without the support and

protection of that Angel, who antiently led our ancestors out of Egypt, it is naturally impossible they ever should have safely come to the end of such a journey. But what do I talk of an Angel? The very divine power was hid in that child. If, at his presence, the pagan Idols and their Oracles were struck mute; much more, at his command, were other creatures to suspend their ferocity, and become tame and tractable! Afterwards, drawing near to Judæa, they passed through cities, towns, and villages, and at length reached Nazareth in Galilee, the place of their former abode. Joseph, from his affection to Mary and the child, and generously disdaining to be burdensome to any, lost no time in getting things ready to follow his calling.

Pilgrim. What a surprize the neighbours must have been in, at seeing Joseph and Mary return, after being absent some years!

Cleophas. And they knew nothing of the motive of their going away, nor of what had happened to them in the mean time; for Jesus was as a pearl hid among the filth of the world. The massacre of the Bethlehem infants, and such like incidents, were known, indeed, to every one; but the drift of them was a mystery. Then there is never that attention to, and enquiry after heavenly things, as after the common concerns of the country. Thus Archelaus's return, his degrading the High Priest Joazarus, and putting Eleazar in his stead, and marrying Glaphyra his brother's widow, Antipas being made Tetrarch of Galilee, his brother Philip of Trachonitis, and Lysanias in Abilene; also the universal peace and tranquillity of the country, Varus having defeated the insurgents, and extinguished every spark of sedition and rivalry; the complaints sent to Rome against Archelaus, with a hundred more such political articles, were discussed over and over in private discourse; whereas not a word of Jesus and his parents. I was then in my sixteenth year, and such things made a lasting impression on my memory; particularly

larly Emmaus, the town where my father lived, being set on fire by Varus's men, and other tumultuous occurrences to be found in the Annals. Of these our neighbours were full; but of Jesus, Mary, and Joseph, I do not recollect the least mention. So careless are men of the things which most concern them. But idle, vain things, of no manner of import, are the topics in all companies; and they shall talk of them with great seriousness and warmth.

Pilgrim. Yet the neighbours, and those who lived thereabouts, observed, it seems, something more than common in that obscure, small family.

Cleophas. I own it; for Mary, in the management of her house, in her carriage, dress, conversation, and every thing, was a model of all decency and virtue. She was my mother's sister, so that I knew her perfectly well. She was of a middling stature, her complexion like ripened corn, her hair inclining to yellow, her eyes clear, and her lips of a rose colour. As to her manners, she spoke little; her dress was plain and simple; she was courteous without the least levity or hypocrisy, and her cheerfulness never exceeded a smile. In a word, every quality of a well-behaved, discreet, pious woman was to be found in her. Her spouse also was a grave, virtuous man, diligent in his employment, and with the like spirit of piety and devotion as Mary: For though he earned his subsistence by the saw and axe, yet differed he greatly from the bulk of artificers; not so much minding how he should add house to house, and enrich his family, but to please God in an exact observance of his holy laws. Accordingly, at every festival, they never failed making their appearance at Jerusalem, how much soever it was out of their way in loss of time and expence; for, besides travelling, nobody was to appear empty before the Lord. These and the like virtues caused them to be taken notice of by their relations and neighbours, who also could not forbear admiring and esteeming them;

yet without laying the matter to heart, as they should.

Pilgrim. I could wish to have had such good acquaintance, but especially to have known that wonderful child Jesus. I long to hear more of him.

Cleophas. Believe me, Son, that were I to take up ever so much time, I could not give you an adequate account of all the qualities and excellencies of that child. From his childhood there appeared in him a most extraordinary composure, and no less sense and wisdom. He seemed always intent on heavenly things. When he could go alone, he was so ready in fetching or handing any thing his parents wanted, that they themselves were struck with his diligence and activity. It was a saying among all the neighbourhood, What a sweet child that Jesus is! How mild, how good-natured! Never refractory, nor out of humour! He has none of other childrens ways. He is never seen playing, or making a noise, or busy about mischief, or so much as to mock any one, which children usually delight in; and his parents never could find him out in any thing that bordered on a lye. In his carriage, in his words and actions, in every part of his behaviour, certainly his equal was never known. It is said of Moses, that he was a beautiful child; of Isaac, that he was much given to prayer and meditation; and Joseph's affection and dutifulness endeared him to his father above all his brethren; but I must think them inferior to this child. With every natural gift was he endued. Had he been a Prince's or King's son, he would have been talked of far and near. What a happiness to be the parents of such a child! But being poor, it was but superficially talked of. For what is a carpenter! Were his father a Priest, or a man of wealth, these fine parts of his son might turn to good account; but things being as they are, plain common sense would serve his turn as well. Such was the talk about the extraordinary talents of Jesus, but very few saw

saw into the mystery; and that, indeed, was no wonder, for Mary and Joseph themselves, though well versed in divine knowledge, did not yet understand the true source and scope of his supernatural abilities, which soon displayed themselves on a very memorable occasion.

Pilgrim. That I should be glad to hear.

Cleophas. When Jesus was about twelve years old, in the eighth year of Archelaus's reign, Joazarus being High Priest at Jerusalem, his parents, taking him with them, went up according to their devout custom, at the Feast of the Passover, but he absented himself from them, and they had set out on their return without him. To this he was not induced by a rambling humour, or a curiosity of seeing sights, like other boys; but, repairing to the Temple, he went to a part of it where the Rabbi's, Priests, Pharisees, and other men of letters used to meet and talk on theological subjects. Jesus, with an amiable modesty, to the great surprize of that venerable assembly, took his seat among them. The books were opened, and several passages read, which gave rise to questions and argumentations. Jesus heard them with the humble silence of a student among consummate philosophers, till he judged it proper to offer some questions on important points. This immediately drew all eyes on him. One said, Who can that be? Another, Did you ever hear the like from a boy? And when they had tried him by some abstruse questions, his answers were so apposite and sagacious, that they owned, with astonishment, they had never heard the like; and as his speech was free from all frowardness or petulance, and every word delivered with the most respectful humility, they were so charmed that they placed him in the middle, that all might partake of the pleasure of hearing such wisdom from such tender years. Now Joseph and Mary, after seeking him three days, came thither; and she seemed a little

Luke ii. 12,
13, &c.

disturbed that he had, contrary to his custom, taken that step without asking leave; but Jesus silenced her, saying, that he must mind his father's business. However, his filial obsequiousness was such, that he left the assembly, and went away with his parents. Though Joseph and Mary were unacquainted with the divine mysteries, yet such was their delight in the child's company, that they forgot all the uneasiness they had been in about him, and whilst they were deeply ruminating on what had passed, they at length came to the steep mountain on which Nazareth stood. At that time the neighbouring country was interspersed with villages, farms, and seats. But, alas! most of them have been destroyed by the wars, which destroy every thing.

Pilgrim. I could wish to know something of the causes of those wars; but the story of Jesus pleases me so, that I must first hear the issue of it. You say, Jesus was the Son of the Most High God. Did he, then, continue in subjection to his parents? Was he not handsomely educated, that he might be fitted to make a figure in the world? For it was very improper that a youth of his endowments should waste his time in fetching water, gathering chips, and then working with the saw, chissel, and plane, and such servile labours, which, it seems, was his father's trade.

Cleophas. You should know, Son, that the wisdom of God has no need of having recourse to man's aid. The Spirit of God, which dwelled in Jesus, was not to be increased by schools, nor lessened by bodily labour. The Pharisees were under a necessity of consulting books; all their learning they had acquired by long application; but Jesus was the root and source of all wisdom. It naturally grew up in him, to the great admiration of all who saw him. He condescended, (a humility very singular, indeed!) to be obedient and assisting to his parents. But his work did not hinder his meditation on heavenly things, and intercourse with God;

God; and the leisure, which he allowed himself, had no appearance of any willingness to exempt himself from the common burden. But to set every one a good example, he gave both body and soul their due, and his deportment was such, that every one admired the combination of grace and discretion which shone in him.

Pilgrim. I find, Father, by your account, that Jesus was not a little famous, though not ranked among the Great, so as to raise a suspicion in Archelaus, or his brother Antipas, of his being the new born King of the Jews.

Cleophas. Very true; and that by reason of the great difference of Jesus's manner and deportment from those of the Nobility, the quarter where all the danger was apprehended. He never was seen with a rapier or poignard by his side, or in any foreign garb; nor did he frequent the houses of the Great. He had no pages or livery men to attend on him; he was never seen at the tavern, exchange, or theatres; nor did he seek to insinuate himself into the good graces of the Pharisees, Scribes, or Saducees, nor court the interest of any leading men, the usual artifices of those who are brewing ambitious designs. What, then, was there in Jesus, to make Archelaus afraid? But, indeed, he had other enemies, who deprived him of his kingdom: For, when he had scarce reigned ten years, the principal men of the Jews, irritated by his tyrannies, preferred a complaint against him to the Emperor, who banished him to Vienne in France, and sent Cyrenius in the quality of Governor, who sold all Archelaus's effects and demesnes, and laid the second poll-tax on the country, which occasioned no small disturbance. One Judas Galileus, a native of Gamala, overtly opposed the tax, and soon found himself at the head of a considerable party, but which, after many bloody encounters, was suppressed; yet the seeds of revolt still remained, and at several times shot up, so as to give a great deal of trouble to Cyrenius's successor, whose
government

government was only biennial. O Son ! the vicissitudes and mutations of rulers, to which this poor country has ever been subject, have been extremely detrimental to it ; and at this time died the Emperor Augustus, a Prince of many good qualities. His successor, Tiberius, sent hither Gratus, who ejected Ananus from the office of High Priest, to make room for one Ishmael ; and, removing him also, appointed Eleazar, Ananus's son, who at the end of a year was superseded by Simon ; and his year being expired, Joseph Caiaphas obtained the office. Oh, that Caiaphas !

Pilgrim. Father, Is it disagreeable to you to repeat these things, or have you suffered in any particular manner by that High Priest, that your tears begin to overflow ?

Cleophas. He brings to my mind a most afflictive remembrance, of which, in its place, you shall hear the cause. Gratus was continued in his post eleven years, when Pontius Pilate was sent to replace him. This Governor also gave rise to many disturbances, bringing into this city the Emperor's ensigns and his bust ; which being contrary to the Jewish Law, a great number of people repaired to Pilate, then at Cesarea, with a petition against such an innovation ; and, though he threatened them with death, they persisted, with such clamours, that he thought it advisable to feign a compliance : But in a second uproar from the same cause, he ordered his guards to fall on the people with bludgeons, and, in this manner, a great slaughter was made. So that his coming was far from auspicious, and very different from that of the Son of David, who now was in his twenty seventh year, led a private life, but of shining sanctity, at Nazareth and in its neighbourhood. O happy fields, in which he walked ; happy places, where he poured forth his prayers ; but much more happy they who have seen and heard him, and who received his doctrines in a good heart, and to whom he has manifested himself !

Pilgrim.

Pilgrim. But how was this manifestation? What were his doctrines?

Cleophas. This is, indeed, a wonderful part of my narrative. Do you see yonder, in the East, two ruinous towers, one something farther than the other; near it is a high precipice, which you can just distinguish, it being a good half day's walk from hence.

Pilgrim. Yes, I have it in my eye. It lies in a line with those broken walls.

Cleophas. Well, close by it is the river Jordan, which, on the East, divides this country from that part which is called Beyond Jordan. Formerly there was a ferry to Bethabara, a well-built, pleasant place; and here, in the fourth year of Pilate and the fifteenth of Tiberius, a series of moral wonders first opened itself. A man, by name John, young, but in his cloathing and manner of life resembling the Prophet Elias, was suddenly seen preaching there; and being of priestly descent, brought up in the austerities of the desert, and delivering his preachings with great vehemence, suitable to the importance of them, he affected the hearts of many. People flocked to him from all parts; the ways were continually thronged. I remember as if it was but yesterday, for I was then forty years old, how affected the people used to come away from him, even to tears, and quite changed. The outrageous and passionate returned meek and gentle as lambs; the rude soldiers became mild, the avaricious publicans liberal, and harlots and profligates seemed to have received quite another heart. The Pharisees looked on with perplexity and heartburnings. They were at a loss what to conclude; for all his docile hearers he baptized in that river. They were seen to acknowledge their sinfulness with the most fervent contrition; whereas the Pharisees, with all their doctrines, scarce made one true convert to holiness of life. As from the prevailing distractions among the Great, and the

Matth. iii.
1, &c.
Mark i. 1,
&c.
Luke iii.
2, &c.

confused

confused state of things, a revolution was universally expected, many questioned whether John might not be the promised Redeemer; but he declared that he was sent only as his forerunner, and that he was near at hand.

Matth. iii. Alas! nobody thought of Jesus, who, a
13, &c. few days after, came forth from Galilee,
Mark i. 9, out of the obscurity in which he had
&c. shrouded himself; but quite unknown, as
Luke iii. 21, one of the meanest of the disciples. Yet,
22. through all this concealment, John saw something
which persuaded him that he was about baptizing one
greater than himself; and, indeed, the baptism was at-
tended with miraculous signs from Heaven, and even
a voice, that Jesus was the beloved Son of the Most
High.

Pilgrim. Now I suppose he mingled with the
Priests, or made his appearance at Court, that he might
solemnly receive the homage due to his dignity, and be
declared King.

Cleophas. No such thing; the pleasures and honours
of this world had no part in him. He betook himself
Matth. iv. to a barren lonely wilderness, without one
1, &c. man to converse with, and where nature
Mark i. 12, offered him no refreshment. In this dreary
13. solitude he continued forty days and
Luke iv. 1, nights, amidst wild beasts, and without
&c. any aliment all the time; and being a spiritual King,
he had a severe conflict with the evil spirits, who
violently urged their temptations, and employed every
crafty inticement to overcome him; but his inviolate
sanctity put them to a shameful flight, and holy
Angels came to congratulate his victory, and to bring
him food. Oh! blessed they, who, in imitation of
Jesus, rejecting the suggestions of Satan, patiently
wait till God is pleased to manifest himself.

Pilgrim. This was such a King as, I believe, never
was heard of before;—But I beg pardon for this in-
terruption.

Cleophas.

Cleophas. Afterwards he went a second time to John, who still continued near Jordan: It was about February when in these countries the Sun is at some height, and dispenses a chearful warmth. About four in the afternoon, Jesus was walking along John i. 15. &c. that pleasant river, with that composure and meekness becoming the appellation of the Lamb of God; two Disciples, induced by John's testimony, went to him, and found in him a knowledge and sweetness of manners, which charmed them so, that they immediately spread a high character of him among their relations and acquaintance. They who looked for a Messiah, could not but conclude Jesus to be the person. His countenance indicated it, his whole deportment proved it, their hearts were sweetly drawn by his words, that, in a very short time, some devout persons, who sought after the things of the Kingdom of God, formed themselves into a little company, and attended on Jesus wherever he went.

Pilgrim. This is delightful to hear.

Cleophas. With these his Disciples, he took a journey of thirty miles through the country, endearing himself to them in many affectionate and edifying conversations by the way, till through woods and fields he came to a place in Galilee, called Cana; John iii. 11. here it was, where first were displayed the powers latent in that divine person; for being with his mother, and other company, invited to a marriage, he sat with all the reservedness consistent with civility; at length the cry was, that there was no wine; one looked at another, the bridegroom and bride seemed much abashed, and Jesus's mother herself concerned at their uneasiness; Jesus, as if he took no notice of the confusion, privately changed six vessels of water into good wine; and this he did more to shew that he was come, as the good bridegroom, to ameliorate all things, than to accommodate the company with wine. Every one admired its delicacy, and soon the

the report was all over the town, of a miracle wrought at the wedding, the like of which had never been heard of. But Jesus, intent on other concerns than the fame of working miracles, left the place, and, taking his way through several towns and villages, at the beginning of April came to Jerusalem, to the great festival of the Passover.

Pilgrim. Did not the Priests receive him with great honours?

Cleophas. Receive him! Very glad would they have been had he never come thither; then had their profane abuses escaped due chastisement: For

ver. 13, &c. on his entering the Temple, here stood oxen lowing, there sheep bleating, yonder doves. Nothing was to be heard but buying and selling, changing and telling money, and such clutter, which was a great offence, and likewise a hindrance to devout persons, among whom many came from far to worship there. Jesus, inflamed with a holy indignation at such a pollution of that sacred place, made a scourge of cords, and drove the beasts out of the Temple; and, as at violent blasts of wind the leaves fly off from the trees, and the branches are agitated to and fro, so here every thing was soon in disorder. They, who were idly walking about, made off in a panic; down fell the tables and benches; the money bags were scattered on the floor; the changers hurried away. Some stood muttering, others were astonished at such an exertion of authority, as more than the Roman garrison in the castle of Antonia would have ventured on. Some again, by this procedure, were convinced in their hearts, and believed in him, as a demonstration of his divine power.

Pilgrim. It was also a wonder, that the Priests and Captains of the temple, being men of great sway, did not oppose Jesus.

Cleophas. Very true; for lesser matters sometimes have occasioned much bloodshed.

John iii. 22.

shed. Afterwards he went into Judæa, where he increased the number of his disciples, and baptized them. In these parts he remained till the month of November; when John the Baptist, Matth. iv. 12. for reproving the dissolute life of Herod Antipas, was closely imprisoned in the castle of Macherunte, which nest of banditti not long after greatly annoyed the Jews, as I shall relate in its place. On this, Jesus went into Galilee; and, in the way meeting with a woman of Sichar, near a well, he asked her to give him some water; which leading on to farther discourse, he gave her and her townsmen to understand, that they needed not be at the trouble of going to Mount Gerizim to worship; God, as a spirit, being to be worshiped in spirit and truth in all places. His conversation gave John iv. 1, &c. ver. 45. his disciples such pleasure and fortitude, that they cheerfully attended him in all his fatigues; and in Galilee he was well received, in regard to the miracles he performed amongst that people preferably to his own countrymen: For though they could not refute his wisdom, or deny his miracles, yet they were filled with jealousy and rancour. Some flouted at the meaness of his extraction; for they could tell who and who was related to him, where they lived, and what business they followed. One was a carpenter, another a gardener, another an armourer, all working men, not one brought up to any kind of literature. Others exclaimed against him, that he was all for strangers preferably to them; and to prove how little deserving they were of his regard, they dragged him up to a precipice near Nazareth, with the murderous design of throwing him Luke iv. 29, 30. down: But this being excepted against by some, a violent contention arose, which gave Jesus an opportunity of withdrawing himself, and thus he left them confounded in their wickedness.

Pilgrim. Whither did he betake himself?

Cleophas.

Cleophas. At the influx of the river Jordan into the lake of Galilee is a town called Capernaum, that is, Fair Town; for besides the prosperity arising from its large trade, it was full of neat beautiful buildings, and the neighbouring country exceeding pleasant. But, alas! that town, from being, as it were, lifted up to heaven, is now cast down, as it were, to hell; that you wonder to see the ruinous condition of its remains. Now great numbers of fishermen lived hereabouts; and since the imprisonment of John, and the attempt of the Nazarenes against Jesus, some of the dispersed disciples had joined them. Here Jesus, walking by the sea-side, saw four of his principal disciples in two fishing-boats, and called them, in order more particularly to authorize them to promulgate the Gospel. They, without the least hesitation, left all and followed him. After this, he distinguished himself by going into the schools of Doctors and confuting their errors, by casting out devils and healing the sick. But time would fail me, Son, to give you a detail of all the wonderful things done by Jesus, during the two years he lived in this town. The remembrance, however, gladdens my heart; for I was, at that time, become one of his disciples, and constantly accompanied him. But it will be best to confine myself to my subject; that is, to give you an account of the destruction of this city, and the causes of it.

Pilgrim. O! Father, what you are upon is so delightful, so elevating, that I intreat you will not drop it. Besides, it is connected with your subject; for the more conspicuously the transcendent dignity of Christ is set forth, the more atrocious is the guilt of this city in putting him to death; for you seem to intimate that to have been the cause of so terrible a catastrophe.

Cleophas. Well, since you desire it, I will enter on some particulars, from the knowledge of which you will convincingly see what a divine personage Jesus was. Therefore, as I was saying, Jesus, when dwelling

ing at Capernaum, used to visit the adjacent country with his Disciples. I have so often indulged myself in the remembrance of Mount Tabor, of the prayers he frequently offered up there, his ravishing discourses, the many miracles of compassion to the diseased performed by him, the many sweet enjoyments we had there of his affectionate communicativeness, that all those things are, as it were, present to me, though now very little short of eighty years ago. I remember, Son, once we walked all over the whole country of Galilee, through Bethsaida, Jamnia, Sephorim, Magdala, Cesarea Philippi, Cana, Jotapata, Cemeron, Cethron, Saffa, Buria, and other places; every where he talked in the schools, to the great edification of the generality, and bountifully cured all the sick who were brought to him, and went to the houses of some. The fame of so extraordinary a preacher spread through the ten towns beyond Jordan, namely Chorazin, Gamala, Julia, Gadara, Astaroth, Jabes, Mispa, Edrei, Ramoth, and Pella, and farther on along Jordan to Jerusalem; also, on the other side, it pervaded all Syria, Damascus, Tyre, Sidon, Tripoli, Apamea, Seleucia, and as far as Antioch. There was no end of the people, which, from all parts, resorted to him, and among them there were waggons, asses, and mules appearing above the rest. Some brought their sick on beds and biers; the blind, the lame, eagerly made their way to the mountain, that there was great bustling among the crouds, each striving to be first, and one and all crying out, Jesus, thou Son of David, have mercy on us. But when the multitudes drew near, he went up to the level on the summit, whence we could see, along all the lower roads, as it were streams of people coming on. It was extremely delightful on that level; the trees, with their lovely foliage, sheltered us from the heat, and the height kept us from being thronged by the people. But sweeter

P

than

Matth. iv.
23, 24, 25.

Matth. v, vi,
vii.

than any thing were his discourses. Every heart was warmed with them. All wondered at the power of his words. The discourses of the Scribes and Pharisees, with all their oratory and human learning, produced no such effects. After declaring the mysteries of God, and laying down the most excellent morality, he proceeded to cure the diseased, to cleanse lepers, to restore strength, and rectify all disorders in the sensitive organs.

Pilgrim. Wonderful proofs of a supernatural power!

Cleophas. It was not diseases alone which were subject to him; his voice also controuled storms and waves: For once, crossing the sea of Galilee, a storm arose in the night, which was also very dark, the sky being all over one thick black cloud, and the sea broke into our little vessel, that we, and even the men that belonged to it, began to think we were in great danger. Hereupon we took the liberty to awaken Jesus, who all the while lay quietly sleeping, as if in a place of perfect safety. Having gently reprov'd us for being afraid when with him, he commanded the storm to cease; and, I can assure you, the wind immediately ceased, the sky cleared up, and the sea became as smooth as a fish-pond, and a serene star-light night succeeded the stormy gloom which had affrighted us. I well remember our joy and astonishment at this happy change

only by his speaking a word or two, also the very kind miracles he did after we had got safe ashore; particularly, how he cast devils out of two men, in whom they raged to such a degree, that every body feared to come near them; but at a word from Jesus the evil spirits left them, and they became as quiet as lambs.

Pilgrim. Did not your age and behaviour give me a high opinion of your veracity, I should suspect your veneration for Jesus carried you too far.

Cleophas.

Cleophas. I am very sensible, Son, that this may seem too wonderful for belief; but I shall pass over many things which might equally stagger your good opinion of me, yet all well known to be true and certain; how he restored the dead to life; how he healed strange inveterate infirmities, of twelve, eighteen, or even thirty-eight years standing; to him it was all alike; a word of that powerful Speaker effected the cure. Nay, however incredible it may appear, they who touched his garment, in hopes of being cured thereby, were immediately relieved, though they made not their case known to him. This sanative power drew after him multitudes of ailing people, who followed him every where, on the water, in houses, in the fields, in the wildernesses, wherever he went they were at his heels; so that sometimes he had not the necessary leisure for food and sleep, and those solitary intervals, which he studiously embraced when not diverted by the solicitations of the afflicted, or other occasions of doing good. It was frequently a current report, Jesus of Nazareth will come to such a place; yesterday he was there, to-morrow he will be here. Then hastened the blind and lame, every one striving to be first; and it has been known, that when there was no coming at him for the crouds, an opening was made through the roof of a house, and the sick person lowered down

Matth. ix.

18, &c.

Lukexiii. 11.

John v. 5.

Mark ii. 3, &c.

Lukex. 18, &c.

into the room where Jesus was, who, you may be sure, would not disappoint such an extraordinary expedient. Oh! how often have I seen the cripple leap with exultation, the blind with astonishment gazing up to the sky, the arthritic rejoicing in the free use of their limbs, the sick thankfully take up his beds and walk, whilst the people stood wondering at such manifestations of goodness and power.

Pilgrim. Every benevolent heart must be charmed with these particulars; but I perceive, by your dis-

course, that you were sometimes in private with Jesus.

Cleophas. I was so, indeed; and I could almost weep for joy in recalling to mind our sweet walks with him; sometimes up an eminence, sometimes along levels, sometimes through vineyards, sometimes through olive-yards, sometimes through corn-fields, sometimes along the pleasant banks of rivers, sometimes through woods; sometimes the spreading cedars sheltered us from the wind and rain, the palms and laurels fenced us from the heat of the sun, and the cypresses refreshed us with their smell. At other times we met with nothing but thorns and briars, though at some distance the country had a better appearance. Here was ploughing, there sowing, or shepherds tending their flocks; and from all these different objects, and many more, Jesus would make some edifying observations: Nay, I cannot think that Solomon, wise as he was, had such a perfect knowledge of the secrets of Nature. There was nothing which he could not improve into a subject of discourse. Trees, plants, corn, vineyards, mustard-seed, fishes, birds, nets, pearls, jewels, hills, merchandize, the common transactions of men, he spiritualized in a manner very instructive to the people. Outward things he minded no farther than by them to represent the nature of the kingdom of God; and to promote that, as man's only happiness, and direct them in the attainment of it, was his whole aim. This he earnestly inculcated to us; and, that such important knowledge might be spread
 Matth. x. among all nations, he chose twelve of his Disciples, the number of the tribes of Israel, as Apostles, in order to reclaim them and all others from their sins and errors. He sent them two together, charging them to mind only the service of God, to be wholly taken up with that, and to give themselves no concern about their living. There was nothing he cautioned us against more than worldly-mindedness, and a solicitous
 care

care about earthly things, as choaking every good seed. They were not so much as to take any provisions or necessaries with them, that they might not be incumbered by the way; and thus they set out, and preached the kingdom of God in towns and villages.

Pilgrim. But I do not understand the not taking any provisions with you; how could you live, as you were not to work, or follow any business?

Cleophas. You would wonder how the Lord of Heaven and Earth provided for our being supplied; sometimes, indeed, our bread ran low, then we made a shift with figs, apples, olives, grapes, and the like fruits, which here grow wild, in great plenty; in harvest time, when hungry, we sometimes plucked a few ears of corn, and rubbed them in our hands; then we were frequently invited into houses. Do not you see yonder, towards the south east, the ruins of a small castle?

Pilgrim. Yes, there, not much above a mile off.

Cleophas. The same; it is called Bethany; and there formerly lived two sisters, devout women, and very liberal and hospitable; they often entertained us, and their kindness is not well to be expressed; they thought, as the saying is, that they could never Lukex.31,&c. make enough of us, especially one of them, named Martha. She was ever on the foot, dressing victuals, setting the table, or doing something or other for our accommodation. Indeed, within myself I pitied her mistaken good nature. Frequently it had been much better for her, like her sister Mary, to have sat and attended to the affectionate conversations of Jesus, which always conveyed some religious instruction. But she was a stirring woman, and acted as if she had no other concern than to make us welcome; whereas this bustling manner of shewing one's kindness is an extreme hindrance to, if not incompatible with, the sedateness which devotion requires. Mary, in the mean time, intent on better things, sat at Jesus's feet,

listening to the word of life, and was so affected, that it threw her into a deep contrition for her negligent life; and this ended in a joy in the grace of God, which she expressed with tears of gratitude. Many other places I could also name, where we met with a

Luke vii. 36.

xi. 37.

viii. 2, 3.

most kind reception. We were not without invitations from the Pharisees themselves, many being desirous of discoursing with Jesus. Farther, it must not be omitted, that some

women, having their hearts entirely set on the things of heaven, accompanied us, and even supplied us from their own substance. Thus did God, as it were with his own hand, provide for our necessities; nay, we often had such plenty as to relieve the indigent: For Jesus was of such a compassionate, benevolent temper, that when he saw any one sick, or in want, or in any kind of distress, he was exceedingly moved, and immediately

Matth. xiv.
14-21.

xv. 32-38.

Mark vi.

34-44.

viii. 1-9.

Luke ix.

2-17.

John vi.

1-13.

helped them, even those who did not apply to him. He has been known plentifully to feed, at one time, troops of four or five thousand men, exclusive of women and children.

Pilgrim. Softly, softly, Father: Why, you must have had ship or cart loads of provisions following you. There could not, certainly, be such great doings as you talk of.

Cleophas. There were no provisions at all. Once, indeed, a youth in the croud happened to have five barley loaves and two broiled fishes; and with these Jesus supplied the multitude.

Pilgrim. This favours of incredibility; but I must hear farther.

Cleophas. On the sea or lake of Galilee are two towns, Tiberias and Bethsaida, at that time very flourishing places. Between them, near a bay of that lake, is a desert, where great numbers had been with him some days, hearing his discourses, I shall never forget it. It was a little before Easter, in the month of March,

when

when all the trees bloomed, and the lively herbage was intermingled with white and yellow flowers. The sun being near setting, many seemed faint with hunger; the children cried, the mothers were tired and spent, and had nothing to give them; and evening coming on apace, there was but a melancholy spectacle. Jesus's pity inclining him to relieve them; he consulted with us about putting his good designs in execution; one was for sending them home, another was for laying out what money we had, which was about five pounds, and giving a pittance to every one; but he himself knew best what was to be done; he caused the multitude to sit down separately, in companies of a hundred or fifty together; and now the wonder was what could be the meaning of this disposition, and what was to follow next. He then took the aforesaid loaves and fishes, and raising his eyes towards Heaven, calling on the Father, he broke them into pieces, and ordered us to distribute them among the people; we simply imagined his hands would be soon empty, but as fast as we dealt the pieces out, they were found to increase in our laps, and under his hands, and likewise in the hands of those who reached the pieces to others; and this continued till all were satisfied; when, to the great amazement of the people, whose acclamations of thanks and praise made all places ring, the fragments gathered up filled twelve baskets. One thought on the manna in the wilderness, another on the Prophet Elisha and the widow of Zarephath; some said, This must certainly be the Prophet whom Moses spoke of; others, in their zeal, cried out, Let us make him King, he is able to deliver us from the Romans; in short, there began to be a great ferment among the people; but it being now dusk, Jesus silently withdrew to a solitary mountain, to converse John vi. 14,
15. with God in prayer and meditation.

Pilgrim. He must have been invested with a wonderful power.

Cleophas. Certainly, and there was such an attractive sweetness in his speech, that his hearers, quite absorbed in holy rapture, forgot their repasts. Once, being in a bark with him, we reached the shore so soon, that we wondered how the time had passed away so swift, whereas before we had been lugging at the oar a tedious time, without gaining any ground: He had been standing on the shore, where seeing us toiling to no effect, he came to us walking on the sea, and stepped into our bark; this he did to try how we would behave in a time of terror; then he comforted us; and it was his endearing conversation which made our passage appear so short,

Pilgrim. I am no less pleased with his affability and goodness, than amazed at his actions; he seems to have been equally kind to all.

Cleophas. All who were afflicted in body or mind sought to present themselves before him: And, about this time came to him the Disciples of John, all in a consternation with the melancholy news that their master had been beheaded at Macherunta by the wicked artifice of Herodias, who, amidst the revelry of a banquet, took advantage of Herod's being pleased with her daughter's dancing, to procure his order that John's head should be immediately brought on a large dish, as for a show, when that cruel woman ran a bodkin through the tongue, because he had reproved the incestuous adultery of Herod in marrying her, she being his brother Philip's wife. The suddenness and manner of their master's unexpected death quite overwhelmed them with grief. Jesus received them with the most tender sympathy and kindness; and having comforted them, took them into a wilderness, where, whilst he prayed, he recommended to them to repose themselves.

Pilgrim. Certainly nothing better for a troubled mind.

Cleophas.

Cleophas. Yes, and they found the benefit of a quiet retirement, but Jesus's ardour to discharge his mission would not admit of a recess of any continuance; he soon shewed himself again, and went from place to place preaching the Kingdom of Heaven, the people flocking to him from all parts in boats, in waggons, on horseback, and even on foot; they left their shops, offices, farms, whatever their business was, to follow him, yet not a few from mere curiosity, others to hear his doctrines, having conceived a favourable opinion of it; and many to be cured of bodily infirmities, for to him nothing was impossible; he restored life to the dead, cleansed lepers, cast out devils; in whatever language he was spoke to, he could answer in the same, that all places were full of his wonderful endowments.

Pilgrim. What was the general opinion of him, as he did such mighty things done?

Cleophas. They knew not what to think of him with any certainty; some, from the Pythagorean opinion, that souls transmigrate from one body to another, imagined him to be Matth. xvi.
14. John the Baptist; whilst others, from his many miracles, rather thought him the Prophet Elias; others, from his exhorting every one to amendment of life, without respect of persons, judged him to be Jeremiah, or at least one of those Prophets, whom God, in old times, sent to reprove, instruct, and comfort his people; but none of them had a true knowledge of him.

Pilgrim. He must, however, have had something noble in his presence, to be compared to such persons.

Cleophas. His shape was rather delicate than robust; in his countenance there was such a mixture of dignity and sweetness, as excited both love and awe; his stature was middling; his hair of the colour of a ripe hazel nut, and, parting on the crown of his head, hung down straight, after the manner of the Nazarenes, to his shoulders,

shoulders, where it curled a little; of the same colour was his beard, which parted in the middle of his chin, and was of no great length; his face perfectly smooth, without any wrinkle, spot, or blemish; his eyes of a mildness inclining to gravity; and his cheeks were tinged with a rosy redness. He spoke little; in exhortation loving; in reproof serious. Tears were not uncommon with him, but he was never seen to laugh. He was also free from all moroseness or anger; and in all his deportment and ways there was such a natural ease and beauty, that justly was he styled the most amiable among the children of men.

Pilgrim. Oh! Blessed were the eyes who saw him, and the ears which heard him!

Cleophas. And much more they which knew him such as he truly was, and were thereby moved to receive his doctrines in an obedient heart; for his dignity was much greater than appeared outwardly. That

he revealed only to those whom he honoured with an intimate confidence, particularly three of the Apostles, Peter, James, and John; for once, whilst he was praying on the summit of Mount Tabor, his countenance altered, and became as the sun in its brightness, and his apparel exceeding white and shining, and on each side of him stood a venerable personage. These were Moses and Elias. What these favoured Apostles saw and felt there, is above all words to describe. They could have wished it had lasted for ever; and not a little dejected were they, when these glories vanished. They thought no more of any thing in the world: It seemed the felicity and perfection of Heaven. They often related, and never without tears, the love which arose in them towards those blessed Prophets, and each other; how sweet the heavenly voice testifying his glory. Some mention, indeed, was made of the cross and sufferings; but such was their rapture, that they laid it not to heart. At last a godly awe seized

Matth. xvii.

1, &c.

Mark ix. 2,

&c.

Luke ix. 28,

&c.

2 Pet. i. 17.

seized them : They seemed quite out of themselves, overpowered by divine irradiations. Then wondered they no longer at any miracles he did ; all their wonder was, that so divine a person had humbled himself so very low, as to become like the children of men, and be subject to contumely, the cross, and sufferings. Such was his humiliation, that he would not have his dignity be openly revealed, as thereby the sense of his approaching sufferings must have been abated or wholly removed. He died for us, and would die with all the feelings of human nature about him. These particulars we had from them afterwards ; for we knew nothing but that he was gone up the mountain to pray, as he frequently did ; for we have known Luke vi. 12,
xxi. 37. him to spend the whole night in prayer.

His constant custom was to rise very early, and withdraw to devotional exercises. Thus, when we walked with him through Galilee, he would lead us up mountains, or into lonely places, and instruct us with a fatherly concern in all things necessary to make us heirs of the kingdom of heaven.

Pilgrim. But did not he walk any longer in public, and converse with the multitude ?

Cleophas. Certainly ; and the following year more than ever. He was for digging and manuring the soil afresh, that it might produce the more abundantly : But previously, from the whole body of his disciples, he made choice of seventy, and sent them, two by two, like the twelve Apostles, being upon leaving Capernaum, where he had chiefly dwelt for the space of two years, and again visit the country for the last time. His exhortations and sermons, the signs and wonders he wrought, his many journies and fatigues, the various reception he met with, the many persecutions he suffered from the Pharisees in this his last circuit, I omit, as nearly resembling what I have already related.

Pilgrim. You seem, Father, to reluct against giving
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any account of the last passages of this excellent person's life.

John vii.

Cleophas. Oh, to think on that feast of Tabernacles ! It was in September, and all places in this city were stuck with boughs. Jesus for some time kept himself concealed, on account of the great ferment among the people. Some, who had assisted at his sermons, and seen the miracles done by him, declared for him, saying, He must be the true Christ, otherwise he could never have the power to do such things, as undeniably he has done : Then his constant devotion, his gravity and mildness, speak him a Prophet. Where was such a man ever heard of ? On the other hand, the Pharisees, and their followers, cried, That he was a seducer, and would set the whole country in a flame. Jesus afterwards shewing himself in public, all were struck with the dignity of his appearance. His doctrine flowed like a stream of living water. The hearts of many were so powerfully convinced, that they shouted forth their belief in him. This irritated the Pharisees, and the croud was very great ; one cried this, another that, when armed men came to seize Jesus, a tumult being apprehended. I well remember what a panic we were in. However, this time all ended very well ; but the next day it was much

John viii. 59.

worse. Jesus had come early into the Temple, and preached divine truths ; but the Jews raved and stormed as if they had been out of their senses, and at last proceeded to throw stones at him. But, to set us an example of patience under ill treatment, he, who with a word could have destroyed them all, quietly withdrew ; and, so far from resenting their brutality, and ceasing to do them

John ix.

good, he immediately after restored sight to one who had been born blind ; but this proved only fresh fuel to the jealousy and malice of the Pharisees, They held secret meetings, and consulted together, and used all manner of artifices to catch him in something wherein

whereon to ground an accusation; but he approved himself a faithful shepherd, John x. come to feed his spiritual sheep. He now again left this distracted blind city, and withdrew to the other side of Jordan, whither he was followed by a multitude of people, among whom were also some agents of the Scribes and Pharisees, watching for an opportunity of laying hold on him by surprize, and carrying him off.

Pilgrim. What could they mean by such implacable rancour against Jesus?

Cleophas. Why, his doctrine in many points clashed with theirs. They made no account of real inward holiness, and for a sanctimonious appearance in the eye of the world were inflexibly rigid. This they placed in an outward observation of the sabbath, washing of hands, ablutions, bathings, fasting outwardly, making loud prayers, and the like externals, the heart remaining unchanged, full of covetousness, malice, and arrogance; whereas the former Jesus exposed as vain and hypocritical, without suitable tempers; the latter he severely reprimanded. He exploded also many of their favourite institutes, and urged purity of heart, doing good to all men, loving our enemies, indifference to worldly things, and not to look for a kingdom on this earth. Earnestly did he admonish us and Matth. xvi. 6. the people to beware of the doctrines of the Pharisees, as illusory and of no solidity. This it was which provoked them, sensible that thus they should lose all their authority, and sink into a level with the common herd; to love one's enemies being inconsistent with oppressing them; an indifference to the world, with an affectation of superiority and a delight in homage. Thus they loaded him with all the abuses malice could John v. 16.
x. 20.
Matth. xi. 19. suggest. Sometimes he was a despiser of the sabbath; sometimes out of his mind, and had a devil; sometimes they exclaimed against him as a friend

friend of publicans and sinners, with many more such railings.

Pilgrim. Bigotry choaks many excellent virtues in us, and blinds us to those of others. But please to proceed.

Cleophas. Jesus, as I said, departing from Jerusalem, went about the country, through the towns and villages, preaching the kingdom of heaven, reproofing, and exhorting; likewise curing the diseases of all who addressed themselves to him. He recommended to his hearers great self-denial, to take up their cross, and not to settle their hearts on any thing in this world. In his teaching he frequently made use of parables, or similitudes, of various things and transactions; but all his public discourses and private conversation tended to edifying. Not an idle word, nor any slander or backbiting ever was known to come from him; and if he deigned a word on worldly concerns, it was no farther than necessity or courtesy.

Pilgrim. Yet we may suppose such talk was often thrown in his way, as all kinds of people resorted to him.

Cleophas. True; it was not on spiritual motives that all came to him. Some would needs consult him about the distribution of their worldly goods; others were curious of knowing whether few or many should be saved; and some had the audaciousness to come with captious questions. Others were taken up with enquiring after news; for the country was full of various reports of what was doing in several parts. Some could, off hand, tell who had been Consuls at Rome such and such a year; that, three years before, Rubellius and Fuscus had filled that high office, and that they were succeeded by Longinus and Quartinus, and these by the Emperor Tiberius and Elius Sejanus; but that Sejanus's enormities having excited an insurrection, Tiberius caused him

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and his whole family to be put to death; the disturbances in the Empire on account of these; that for the current year, Domitius Enobarbus, and Vitellius Nepos were raised to the consulship. They could also tell how Herod Antipas, with great slaughter, lost a battle against Aretas, King of the Arabians, who had levied an army purely to revenge the injury done to his daughter, Antipas's wife, by his repudiating her to make room for the adulteress Herodias; and not a few looked on this bloody defeat as a judgment on him, for his cruelty to John the Baptist.

Others talked of Pilate's having killed ver. 1. some ill-affected Galileans, and mingled their blood with their sacrifices; also how the tower of Siloam suddenly fell, and crushed eighteen persons. These and the like events they used to canvass with great heat, and, wrangling about who was in fault, brought their impertinences before Jesus for a decision. To every thing, however, he gave them such answers, as conveyed some solid instruction. In his way through Samaria and Galilee he healed Lukexvii. 12, &c. two lepers; and now, it being the feast of the Dedication, which was in the month of December, he again went to Jerusalem, and walking Johnx. 22, &c. in one of the porches of the temple, a clamorous rabble of Jews gathered about him, and furiously insisting that he should declare whether he was the true Christ, the late commotion at the feast of the Tabernacles being still fresh in their mind, Jesus mildly reasoned with them: Yet, instead of acquiescing, or going away peaceably, they gathered stones to kill him; the way of all wicked people, when they are nonplus'd. Jesus, on this, quitted the city, and came to Bethabara on the river Jordan. Oh! his many melancholy steps through the Valley-gate, of which, from hence, you still see some pieces; particularly now, when, like an exile, he was compelled to depart and seek shelter near the Jordan. These insults were, the
commence-

commencements of that nefarious crime, for which, as you see, the country was so severely scourged.

Pilgrim. How long did he continue there?

Cleophas. But a short time; something falling out, which drew him to the neighbourhood of Jerusalem.

Pilgrim. To expose himself again to those flagitious wretches.

Cleophas. The disciples could have wished him to remain beyond Jordan. They had not forgot the outrages of his adversaries, how they threatened, gnashing their teeth for malice, and throwing of stones; also the ill treatment, the hardships and afflictions they had undergone at Jerusalem and other places. But Jesus's benevolence seemed to brave danger, and the urgency of the case admitted of no delay.

Pilgrim. It must also have been some weighty concern.

Cleophas. Lazarus, one of his kindest friends, lay dangerously ill, so that his two sisters, who had so often entertained us, and had a great affection for their brother, dispatched a messenger to Jesus, requesting he would come and restore health to his friend; but, before his arrival, he receives advice of his death. However, he goes on, apparently much dejected.

Pilgrim. Did his disciples go with him?

Cleophas. Yes; but with fear and trembling, expecting nothing but death, and determined to die with him.

Pilgrim. So he went purely to comfort his friend's sisters.

Cleophas. Yes, by raising him to life again.

Pilgrim. Wonderful!

Cleophas. Jesus, on his coming to Bethany, found the house full of relations and acquaintance from Jerusalem, come to condole with the afflicted sisters, who, hearing that Jesus was drawing near, went to meet him, the active Martha first, and soon followed the

the sedate Mary, but without the least hope of what Jesus intended, their minds being quite plunged in sorrow, and all about them were weeping and wailing: Jesus himself, when shewn the grave where worthy Lazarus lay, joined also in their tears. There is no expressing the amaze, the terror, and joy of the bystanders, at seeing the corpse, only at the call of Jesus, come forth from the grave, roll about his eyes, a vital red efface his paleness, and his arms move as if he was only arisen from his daily sleep. Such a miracle soon flew from one end of the city to the other; it was the talk in all companies; private houses and the places of resort were full of it. Every one expressed an eagerness to be certified of the truth of such an extraordinary event. Great numbers were firmly convinced of his being the Christ, and that the Pharisees were utterly in the wrong.

Pilgrim. But what construction was put on this numerous conversion?

Cleophas. Never was known such a dangerous juncture. Many feared that the country was at the eve of its destruction; for, had they set up Jesus for King, (and some shouts were heard which looked that way,) the Romans, against whom this would have been a direct revolt, would have put every thing to fire and sword. The men of the robe began to hurry to and fro. The Sanhedrim, or grave Council of Seventy-two, was convened, and not one member absented himself. Several expedients were proposed, many motions were made, the exigency being of the utmost importance. At last, on the persuasion of Joseph Caiaphas, it was resolved, that there was no other effectual expedient than putting Jesus to death, and to seize the first opportunity of doing it. But how blind is the craft of man! What was held to be the surest preservative, proved the very occasion of all the subsequent calamities which befel this poor country; the Romans having desolated it as a chastisement of their continual

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insurrections,

insurrections, and not on account of any party formed to set up Jesus. The sentence passed on Jesus was soon made public by edicts, ordering all persons to apprehend Jesus wherever they met him, and deliver him up to the great council.

Pilgrim. What measures did Jesus take?

Cleophas. He silently withdrew to a desert near the town of Ephraim, not far from Jericho. We accompanied him. It was inexpressibly delightful. The palm trees were in their full verdure, the roses in their bloom, and innumerable odoriferous herbs spread their reviving scents through the air. The sun shone with a genial heat, it being now spring; for we continued here all the month of March, remote from the fury of the Pharisees, and enjoying the sweet, the consolatory, the divine conversations of our Lord. The world

seemed to be of no farther regard to us; we could have staid there for ever with the dear Jesus. But the Passover approaching, he intimated to us his intention of going again to Jerusalem, and talked of

what he was to suffer there, which grieved us to the heart. Yet how fluctuating and variable is man's heart! Instead of that blessed heavenly-mindedness which we felt in our recess, it was now changed into wrangling. One was for being master; another would not bear it. But Jesus, by his mild wisdom, silenced them, and gave us to understand, that ambition did not belong to

Matth. xx.
17, &c.
Mark x. 32,
&c.
Luke xviii.
31, &c.

his disciples. As he passed through Jericho, great multitudes following him; he instructed them in the things of the kingdom of heaven; and he restored sight to two beggars.

All who came to him he received with the greatest affability and kindness, even notorious sinners, when expressing a sorrow for their wickedness.

Luke xix. 1,
&c.

Thus Zaccheus, a chief of the Publicans, was so affected by Jesus's goodness, that he came to him, lamenting his sins, and gave half of his

his substance to the poor, and invited Jesus to take up his abode with him. But to return to our journey. When we had passed the ruins of the ancient city in the desert of Quarentena, and came in sight of the stately edifices of Jerusalem as it then was, namely, the King's palace, the castle of Antonia, the tower of Ophel, the mounts Akra and Besetha, with their lofty buildings, and especially the glorious splendor of the Temple, lifting its head far above all the other parts, many high gates and large towers adding to the grandeur of the appearance, we were struck with consternation, dreading what might be the event of Jesus's going thither. But he left the city on the right hand, and went to his friends at Bethany.

Pilgrim. Who, no doubt, were rejoiced at the coming of their shepherd.

Cleophas. Oh! Words cannot describe the joy and cordiality with which they received us; till, with great concern, they began to acquaint us of some particular proceedings of the malicious Pharisees, of their endeavours to find out Jesus, and of their proclaiming a reward for any who should apprehend and secure him. They also had the same fears with us, that, on our coming within Jerusalem, Jesus's enemies would, by some means or other, compass their ends on him, and we should share his fate; but Jesus, not displeased at their tenderness, mildly signified to them, that he was to suffer at this feast of the Passover: Such was the Father's pleasure; to that end was he sent; but of benefit inexpressible would his sufferings be to all who believed in him. This threw us into a melancholy silence. Martha, who had a very honest, well-meaning heart, got ready a supper with such diligence and plenty, as if sensible it would be the last time of her having the pleasure of entertaining us. But grief left us little inclination to eat; the thoughts of Jesus's approaching death quite overwhelmed the whole com-

Matth. xxvi.
6, &c.

Mark xiv. 1,
&c.

John xii. 1.

pany; and Mary, to give the last token of her respect to Jesus, poured some very costly ointment on his head, and bathed his feet with her tears. On her opening the box of ointment, the fragrancy scented all the house, and we wondered at her great love; for the ointment she had poured could not have cost less than five pounds. Every heart was transported to see their Master thus honoured, and became enkindled with the like divine love, except one of us, who was even then full of black devices. That hypocritical, false-hearted traitor!

Pilgrim. This circumstance, Father, goes very near your heart. What was, then, this man?

Cleophas. In outward appearance and office an Apostle, who, like the others, had accompanied Jesus; but in heart he was a traitor, and very justly called Iscariot, that is, a Ditch covered with Briars. This avaricious wretch dared to frown at Mary, by whose liberal hospitality he had so often been refreshed; and, after

Matth. xxvi.

14, 15, 16.

Mark xiv.

10, 11.

Luke xxii.

3-6.

dropping some scandalous reflections on the anointing, he bolted out of the house. Now he repaired to the council of the High Priests, who were not a little surprized at one of Jesus's Disciples appearing in their presence. On being asked his business, he made no difficulty of declaring to them, that it was, on condition of a reward, to betray his master into such hands as they should appoint. In his eyes, gesture, and whole appearance there was a wild ferocity, as of one agitated by gloomy ideas; as indeed Satan, finding him a proper subject to work on, had wrought in him a forgetfulness of all Jesus's kindnesses, and impressed him with many horrid passions; otherwise it is not in nature that he could ever have gone about a crime of so deep a dye. The High Priests were rejoiced at this unexpected proposal, and agreed to give him thirty silver pieces, provided he delivered up Jesus, by day or night, without any disturbance; that he was to advise them

of

of the time, and they would be ready immediately to give him what assistance he required. With this perfidious intent he returned to us, who knew nothing of the matter; but Jesus, to whose divine knowledge all secrets were open, had, in the Spirit, seen all his negotiation with the Priests; but, instead of saying any thing to him, treated him with his wonted affability. This treachery made no disagreeable impression on him, being known to him from the beginning, as the good pleasure of the Father, and the result of the heavenly scheme for man's redemption.

Pilgrim. I know not whether I execrate the traitor's ungrateful wickedness more than I admire Jesus's lenity. Both, as very extraordinary, open a vast field of meditation, and increase my desire of hearing the issue.

Cleophas. The next day, being Sunday, Jesus, agreeable to the prophecy, intending to make his entry into Jerusalem on a she-ass, sent away two of his disciples for it, whilst we came on foot to that small village called Bethphage, yonder, behind the Mount of Olives; but you may observe that some ruins shew it to have been larger than in its present state. You also see, on one side of the mountain, a road which winds off another way.

Matth. xxi.
1, &c.
Mark xi. 1,
&c.
Luke xix. 29,
&c.

Pilgrim. I see it very plainly.

Cleophas. There the two disciples met us with the she ass. Having laid our cloaths over it, we seated the Lord of Lords on the beast; and, on his approach to the city, he was met by a multitude of people marching like an army: But instead of arms they had only boughs, as receiving their King in a triumphant manner. The air rang with joyful acclamations; and all the road leading to Jerusalem, being about the distance of a mile and a half, was strewed with branches of palm, olive, and other trees. Transport appeared in every face; and some, pulling off their upper garments, spread them on the ground, in token of greater

homage to their supposed King. The eyes of all were fixed on Jesus, who came on with a graceful meekness, in the midst of his disciples, and crouds holding up branches of palm-trees, that it looked like a moving wood, and shouting, "Hosanna! The Son of David! Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord." The Disciples, in the mean time, relating to the people the glorious works he had done; how he had made the blind to see, the deaf to hear, the lame to walk, with many other the like acts of goodness and supernatural power, and had even raised the dead to life, of which they had a recent and well-known instance in Lazarus. They also shouted, "Hosanna in the highest! Blessed be the kingdom of our father David!" The Pharisees, vexed to the heart at these marks of honour thus publicly shewn to the object of their malice, went up to Jesus, telling him, "It would become him to suppress such riotous behaviour, (as they termed it,) of his followers." But the answer they received from Jesus was, "That it was now impossible to silence the people in their praises of God; and, otherwise, the very stones would proclaim it." Being come to the Mount, whence he had a full view of the city; which then, besides its magnificence, was of a great breadth and length, as the ruins of the walls plainly shew, particularly the outward wall, which was little short of nine miles in circuit; and seeing, amongst many other noble structures, the incomparable Temple, with its golden roof, reflecting such a glorious effulgence; considering also the condition into which it is fallen, or rather, by his divine intuition, having present to him all the calamities and miseries which were coming on it, and so near that the next generation would live to see them; but chiefly that this catastrophe was owing to their sins, of which they had not the least sense, and, instead of repentance, were swelling the number of their iniquities, he wept very bitterly, and with such emotions as drew tears from us all. He lamented

lamented their blindness, and foretold their fall, but in words so interrupted by bursts of grief, that they could not be entirely connected together; and even when, at length, he was come within the city, his eyes and cheeks were still wet with tears. It was through that gate on Mount Sion, called the Fountain-Gate, though now you see only a heap of rubbish, that he entered, and immediately the whole city was in an uproar, the windows and doors were flung open, the people gazing, and asking, "What is the matter?" To whom the multitude, who ran before, answered, "It is Jesus, the Prophet of Nazareth, come from Galilee."

Pilgrim. An alarming entry for an unknown Monarch! And what did he in the city?

Cleophas. Whatever he judged necessary to be done, previously to his sufferings. First, according to his custom, he went to the Temple, out of which he again drove the money-changers, the sellers of beasts and birds, and other dealers, as an avaricious abuse of that sacred place. And when the Pharisees questioned him concerning this procedure, he in several parables exposed their hypocrisy, oppression, and cruelty. Three days successively he taught in the Temple, in the evening retiring to Bethany or the Mount of Olives; in which time he suffered a great deal from the opposition and insidious questions and turbulency of the Pharisees, Saducees, and Herodians; but dextrously eluding their snares, or confuting them with unanswerable strength, he put them to open shame before their admirers, that they never after would venture to exchange a word with him. Afterwards, reproving the hypocrisy of the Pharisees, and foretelling the chastisement which waited them for all the blood shed by their sanguinary practices, on Tuesday evening, going out of the Temple, the disciples shewed him with wonder the stateliness of the edifice, and especially

Matth. xxi.

12, &c.

Mark xi. 15,

&c.

Luke xix.

45, &c.

Matth. xxiv.

1, &c.

Mark xiii. 1,

&c.

Luke xxi. 5,

&c.

especially the stones of which it was composed, being no less than twenty yards long, six in thickness, and eight broad, and joined with such art that the insertions were imperceptible. The towers about the temple were constructed in the like manner. "However admirable these things appear to you, answered Jesus, the time is coming when not one stone shall be left on another;" which, though then very improbable, is within my time come to pass, and you yourself, Son, too plainly see it. And sitting down on that Mount of Olives, he informed us of many calamitous circumstances which would precede this deplorable overthrow, as famine, pestilence, wars, massacres, and distress, all over the country; and then should the city be closely besieged, and suffer the very extremity of all that is horrid and afflictive, and at length be destroyed and trodden under foot. This sad prediction he delivered with an earnestness and sympathy that made a great impression on us; and it is as if I still heard him.

Pilgrim. Then you staid there late in the night.

Cleophas. The forepart of the night we usually spent in devotional exercises, particularly at this melancholy juncture, when Jesus was preparing to leave the world. On yonder eminence once stood a village called Gethsemane, where was a garden in which we frequently withdrew to join in prayer, it being a very quiet, retired place. Jesus heving passed near two days in the closest devotion with his chosen friends, whilst the Pharisees narrowly watched a favourable opportunity for their grand project, and seeing death before his eyes, he made known his departure and last will to his disciples, with all the affection of a father to his children. On Thursday evening, having, conformably to the Law, eaten the Paschal Lamb with his disciples, and the ceremony being ended, he humbled himself as a mean servant, and washed and dried their feet, himself pulling off and putting on his cloaths. Now, with very deep recollection, he broke

John xiii.

broke bread, and distributed a piece to each. Then he filled a cup with wine, and bade us drink, saying, "That he gave his body to be thus broken and his blood to be thus poured out for us;" of which

Matth. xxvi.
26, &c.
Mark xiv.
22, &c.
Luke xxii.
19, &c.

words, at that time, we understood nothing: But when we saw his body hanging on the cross, pierced and lacerated, that the blood issued like water from a spring; alas! then we clearly perceived his meaning. Never could we have imagined that, with all his tenderness, Christ's love for us would have gone such lengths at which nature shudders, or that there was such a mystery in the bread and wine, had we not experienced it, and both heard and seen it. Therefore has it always been accounted among us a necessary institution, that no article of Christ's passion should be forgot. Now hear farther: Jesus obliquely pointed out the traitor, who thereupon had slunk away to put his impious design in execution, as the right time for delivering up the divine personage whom he had villainously sold; and our Lord, seeing us dejected, comforted us in the most fatherly sympathy. He seemed now to surpass himself in effusions of tenderness, intermixed with very sublime doctrines and predictions. He now left the house where he had celebrated the Passover; and, whilst we followed him, he continued his edifying discourse. Our hearts burned with love for him. We all seemed ready to lay down our lives for his sake. Peter even walked before, as if determined, at any rate, to prevent any harm being done to our Master. But, alas! this was all a rash ignorance and blindness; our situation required other kinds of weapons. When the holy Jesus, the leader of our faith and captain of our salvation, was come into the retired garden I before spoke of, he left us under extreme melancholy, and fell down in prayer with uncommon intenseness; for now anguish and distress had

Matth. xxvi.
36, &c.
Mark xiv.
32, &c.
Luke xxii.
32, &c.

taken

taken hold of him. He laboured under a conflict between life and death. His human nature represented to him the scourgings, the mockeries, the contumelies, which he was to suffer from the Jews, the dreadful pangs of death, the undeserved agonies, which, by an exertion of his all-sufficient power, he might have avoided: These, with many other inscrutable oppressions, made his soul sorrowful unto death. These horrors were combated by his ardent concern for our salvation, and that of the many thousands of thousands of souls, who, by his sufferings, were to be redeemed and admitted to the enjoyment of eternal felicity. Humanity, however, relucted; and he prayed three times very earnestly, that, were it possible, the cup of affliction might pass by him. Oh! Son, you may think what perturbations he was struggling with; for his sweat ran down from him on the ground like drops of blood; and, had not an angel from heaven comforted and supported him, he must naturally have sunk under his agonies. At length he overcame the conflict of death, and resigned his will to that of his heavenly Father, who, in his unsearchable wisdom, had fore-ordained his sufferings. And thus, by his obedience, has he recovered what Adam's disobedience had forfeited. Adam followed the bent of his sensitive appetite, contrary to the divine will, and the consequence was death. Christ, contrary to the bent of his flesh, conformed to the will of God, and thus has entailed eternal life on his true followers. Both were transacted in a garden, and both related to the whole human race.

Matth. xxvi.

47, &c.

Mark xiv.

43, &c.

Luke xxii.

47, &c.

John xviii.

3, &c.

Pilgrim. Your observations are very apposite and just.

Cleophas. Scarce was this severe temptation over, when suddenly the noise of men running up and down the garden was heard. The wretches were not ashamed to avail themselves of a season of devotion.

Instantly

A.D. 34. a PILGRIM and CLEOPHAS. 235

Instantly the disciples started from sleep, into which they had fallen, being overcome with fatigue and sorrow. The blaze of the torches and clashing of the weapons at first threw them into great consternation; but their courage a little revived on seeing the rugged foldiers, only at a word from Jesus, fall backwards as in a swoon, and others standing all pale and trembling near Judas, who, going hypocritically to work, had the audaciousness to kiss, with his polluted mouth, the holy Jesus. At this signal, the strife was who should first lay hold of our Master. The ropes to bind him were produced, and the swords and staves clashed against each other; for Peter had begun to oppose force by force; and, very fortunately for him, his sword, grazing the head of one Malchus, only took off an ear. But this zeal was far from being approved by the mild Jesus, who reproved Peter, and, in return for the others fury against him, healed his ear. In all things, to the very last, he demeaned himself as the Lamb of God, in whom wrath was to have no place. Then, in the presence of some of the Chiefs of the Temple, who, because Jesus submitted himself for a while to their insolence, conceited themselves persons of great consequence, they bound him and furiously dragged him into the city, little thinking that soon they should be thus bound by thousands, to be sold as slaves by the Romans.

Pilgrim. Such is the inconsiderateness of man, when passions have the ascendant. And what did they now with Jesus?

Cleophas. First, they led him to Annas, where a brutal servant struck him on the face. Then, with great bustle, he was hurried along the streets to Caiaphas the High Priest. The commonalty knew nothing of this midnight uproar; many opened their windows to see what it could be; and, in the morning, the question

John xviii.
23, &c.
Matth. xxvi.
57, &c.
Mark xiv.
12, &c.
Luke xxii.
14, &c.
John xviii.
19, &c.

among

among neighbours was, What a hurly-burly there has been in the night! What could be the matter? Oh! answered one, I hear they have taken Jesus of Nazareth. Another would say, What! Have they laid hold of that good man? They had better look out after robbers and murderers. It is well known, the country swarms with them.

Pilgrim. Here, I suppose, his capital enemies had assembled.

Cleophas. Yes. There sat fretting, with rancorous impatience, Caiaphas, Joazarus, Ishmael, Simon the son of Camithus, John, Alexander. and many others of the Council; whilst Jesus was silent, like a lamb before his shearers. Near the fire stood two suborned villains, who came with some false information or other against Jesus. Then was seen how much a good conscience can bear in silence. But Caiaphas, wanting something more positive to proceed on, extorted from Jesus a confession that he was the Son of God. At this they wrung their hands and rent their garments: The pontifical robe itself Caiaphas did not spare; unknowingly exhibiting a type, that his office, like a rent garment, was soon to be laid aside. One and all of this iniquitous Council bellowed out, that he deserved to die. In the mean time, they who held Jesus, and others of the refuse of the people, to please their betters, mocked and insulted him in the most brutish manner, even by striking him and spitting in his face. Sometimes, having blinded him, they struck him, then said, "Prophecy to us who struck thee." Alas! Their scandalous behaviour, their notorious impieties were a prophecy that the country would become a perpetual mockery to the Pagans; and that insolent mob, now so free of their hands, when they should get the mastery would not wait for a judicial sentence to put all the Priests, and all their families, to the sword.

Pilgrim.

Pilgrim. Oh, how frequently is man instrumental to his own ruin !

Cleophas. That is perfectly applicable here. Morning was now coming on ; and as they had unanimously condemned him to die, all that remained was to procure the sentence to be ratified by Pontius Pilate, the Roman Governor, who, as I said, had succeeded Gratus, and had just entered on the sixth year of his administration. They contrived against Jesus the most odious accusations to be accompanied with the most virulent invectives, as it were to force the Governor to approve of their sentence ; and, thus prepared, they brought him before Pilate.

Matth.
xxvii. 8.

Pilgrim. How was it, in the mean time, with his Disciples.

Cleophas. Poor creatures ! They were scattered like sheep without a shepherd. The sad news soon reached Bethany, where the women, who had followed him a great way, and were ardently attached to him, fell into the most passionate lamentations ; and Peter's courage, lately so forward, now failed him. Instead of continuing with Jesus to comfort him, he pusillanimously forsook him. Finding himself amidst a croud of armed men, and many looking sternly at him, as if they would lay hands on him, fear overcame duty, and he conveyed himself away, though with a reluctant heart. He was too weak for the trial. Jesus alone could tread the wine-press without a helper.

Matth.xxvi.
69, &c.
Mark xxiv.
66, &c.
Luke xxi.
55, &c.
John xviii.
17, 25, 26.
27.

Pilgrim. I own, Peter's timidity does not so much surprize me as the blindness of the High Priests, who, being spiritual builders of God's house, should have been wiser than to revile and sentence to death Jesus, the true corner-stone of the whole building.

Cleophas. It had been written, that this corner-stone was to be rejected by the builders, and of which the building

building of the Temple, according to a tradition of our forefathers, afforded a figure; for there was a stone, so full of angles, that, not being fit for any one part of the building, it had been thrown by in the dirt, that comers and goers frequently stumbled at it. Afterwards, when, in process of time, the building came to be nearly finished, a hole remained in the upper part near a corner, and all the art and labour of the artificers could not exactly close it. A great many other stones were hewn, cut, and notched all manner of ways, and seemingly as exact as could be, yet, on one side or other, still there was a gap, that they were quite at a stand about finishing the Temple with a symmetry answerable to the other corners. At last, the stone, which had lain so long in the dirt as of no use, came to be thought of; and, being drawn up, it was found to fit the aperture completely. Thus, to the wonder of all who saw it, this stone became the chief in the corner. Yet was this so ordered by God, as a figure of Jesus Christ. Hence we are also to learn, that the divine light does not always associate with skill and learning; nay, frequently it is quite otherwise; and, particularly, God has now been pleased to accomplish salvation by the simple and illiterate, to put to shame those who glory in their prudence and erudition.

Pilgrim. So far I am satisfied, and, thus, the more eager after the sequel.

Cleophas. They dragged Jesus, as I was saying, before the Governor; who, not a little alarmed at such a noise at his door
 Matth. xxvii. 1. Mark xv. 1. Luke xxiii. 1. John xviii. 28. so very early, coming out, saw a croud of armed men, and, in the midst of them, a person of a sober amiable aspect, bound with cords, and whom they used very roughly, whilst the impatient Priests, pointing at him with looks of rage, poured forth the most heinous accusations against him. But Pilate, from their very animosity and the com-
 posture

posure of Jesus, apprehended that it was only for some trifle of their Law they made all this disturbance; yet was this dove-like man farther drove and pushed along to Herod's palace, who lived at a considerable distance. Alas! Never shall I forget the running, the shouting, and mobbing, that there was in the streets. The effeminate courtiers, immersed in luxury, after some insolent taunts, remanded him back to Pilate; but, before leading him out, they added the mockery of putting a white robe on him; and thus, amidst the flouts, hissings, and hallowings of a populace inflamed by their guides, he was a second time brought before the Roman Governor. But, Oh, how wretched has been the end of those streets! How they now lie undistinguishable heaps of ashes! How is the whole city become the scoff and contempt of the whole world! A chastisement not beyond its demerits. And that Herod, within seven years after, how was he mocked and insulted before the council of the Roman Emperor Caligula, who, having stripped him of his titles and revenue, sent him a despicable exile to breathe his last in so remote a country as France. Surely such a reverse could not but suggest what a mock King he was become himself, as the retaliation of his insulting behaviour to the innocent Jesus!

Pilgrim. Father, excuse me: You are something long in your reflections. The issue, with regard to Jesus, is what I now wait for.

Cleophas. Oh! Son, the subject rends my very heart; and, the more as I was an eye-witness of these things. But Pilate, on seeing Jesus brought a second time, turned his thoughts how to deliver him, or at least to rid himself of this trouble. He signified to the Priests, that it was customary at this feast to release a prisoner; and he made choice of a notorious malefactor, whose

Luke xxiii.
7, &c.

Matth. xvii.
15, &c.
Mark xiv. 6,
&c.
Luke xxiii.
17, &c.
John xviii.
39, 40.

condem-

condemnation had given great satisfaction to the people, on account of the tumults raised by him, in which many murders were committed. This wretch and Jesus he placed together, concluding that the Priests could not be so lost to decency and humanity, as to prefer a flagitious hardened villain before Jesus, whose mien seemed to attract respect, and who had done so much good. But the event proved he was mistaken in his good intentions.

Pilgrim. Is it possible that it could be otherwise?

Cleophas. You shall hear. Pilate, standing between Jesus and Barabbas, on an elevated place, by reason of the croud, some with aprons, others with a cleaver, saw, or some other tool, Priests in their trailing robes, grave scribes, rich citizens, also country folks, and strangers, come from Samaria, Galilee, and other parts, to the feast, he solemnly put the question, Whom of the two they would have released, Barabbas or Jesus? A general silence ensued. The people looked at one another, then on Barabbas, then on Jesus, whom many favoured, knowing what a deal of good he had done; how he had given sight to the blind, made the deaf to hear, and the lame to walk, and had cured the sick; how he had fed thousands when they were fainting with hunger; what tenderness he had shewn to all who applied to him; and with what freedom and dignity he had lately preached in the Temple. They thought it would be very strange and improper to condemn so good and valuable a person, and release a fellow who was only a pest of society. Thus, though some objected that the Priests could not be supposed to have accused him without sufficient grounds, yet they who were for releasing Jesus seemed to have the majority on their side; and, had the people been left to themselves, it would have taken that turn. But the High Priests and Elders, bent on his death, hearing a general murmur, ran among the croud, calling out:

Matth.
xxvii. 23.

“Ye

A.D. 34. *a* PILGRIM *and* CLEOPHAS. 241

“Ye men of Israel, be not too hasty in giving your votes : Hear first what we have to say. You are, for the most part, void of any learning and experience. All you know, is only what you have learned in your shops and workhouses : Whereas it is to us Priests, trained up in sciences and sacred knowledge, that belongs the cognizance of spiritual things. We know best what is fit to be done with this Jesus. Do not be imposed on by his hypocritical sanctity and meekness. He is a man of very bad intentions, and, particularly, a blasphemer against God ; nay, he has dared to say, that he is God. He is also a sabbath-breaker. He sets the sacred Law of Moses at nought, and makes a jest of the institutions of the Elders. Barabbas, indeed, is a murderer ; but his crimes concern only the body ; whereas the false doctrines and seducements of this demure impostor destroy the soul : And how much worse is he who casts the soul into endless perdition, than he who deprives the body of a short, uncertain life. Consequently, how much more does he deserve to die than the other ? And should you, from natural pity, grieve that so good a man should be nailed to the cross ; consider that it is better for us that one man should die, than that the whole people should be cut off, root and branch ; and this would be the certain consequence from the Romans, should he be suffered to go on ; and this we are better judges of than you.” These, and the like remonstrances, staggered the multitude. Some hung their heads, as if in deep consideration. Others, who seemed very zealous for the Law, began already to drop some words about crucifying, and eagerly waited for Pilate’s turning to the people, as he was then speaking to one of his pages, who had brought him a message from his spouse, desiring, by all means, that he would not incur the guilt of condemning that righteous man. Then Pilate, trusting to the discretion of the people,

Matth.xxvii.
19, 21.
Mark xv. 11,
&c.
Luke xxiii.
8, &c.

R

and

and the manifest difference of the parties, put the question a second time, Which of the two they would have released? The words were no sooner out of his mouth, when, to his extreme astonishment, the air rang with, Release Barabbas to us, release Barabbas. At this Pilate, with some concern, asked them, What he should do with Jesus? Here the multitude cried out, Crucify him. And when Pilate was for intimating that Jesus had not deserved any such punishment, they grew more clamorous, that there was scarce any hearing for the noise. Priests, scribes, citizens, peasants, artificers, tradesmen, joined in the cry, and, seeing him still backward, they added some threatening

expressions, and even charged him with
 Matth. xxvii. 26. being no friend to the Roman Emperor,
 Mark xv. 15. as favouring incendiaries, that Pilate at
 Luke xxiii. 24, 25. length was prevailed on to comply with
 their demands. Then the murderer, contrary to his expectation, was loosened and discharged; and well were they requited; for, returning to his former life, and having got together a gang, he ravaged the country, and robbed and murdered all who came in his way.

Pilgrim. Terrible perverseness! But how did it end?

Cleophas. Alas! How could it end, but in the most barbarous and brutal manner? There was a custom among the Romans, that they who were to be crucified were first to be scourged. Accordingly he was delivered up to savage executioners, who bound him to a stone pillar, where, Oh horrid! the Prince of Angels was scourged till his body was all in a gore of blood, whilst the soldiers, and others of the croud which stood by, by their laughter, gibes, and gestures, seemed to strive who should most increase his sufferings, having with this hellish view led him to the hall of justice, where, having torn off his cloaths, they by way of mockery threw over him a purple

purple mantle, the peculiar colour of Kings, and put into his hand a cane, or reed, for a sceptre, one making faces at him, another kneeling before him, and, with a taunting tone, saying, Hail, King of the Jews! A third spit in his face, and a fourth brute, clinching his fist, dared to strike him, while others were eagerly busy in plaiting a wreath of thorns, as what must put him to no small pain, and suited their mantle and sceptre; after squeezing it on his head, so as to draw blood, they took the reed out of his hand, and with it drove the crown of thorns farther down, that now the blood ran from every part of his head on his garment. All these sufferings he bore with the most calm patience. Not the least mark of impatience or resentment was seen in him. A composed deportment shewed the elevation of his soul. And this struck Pilate himself, who hereupon renewed his endeavours to appease the clamour, and save Jesus; but he might as well have moved the stones.

Pilgrim. The remembrance of these events, Father, extremely affects you. A tear accompanies every word.

Cleophas. Pilate ordered him to be led out, with all his mock ornaments, and his head trickling with blood, and thus to be placed in the full view of the multitude, and, pointing to him; said, Behold the man! All eyes were immediately raised to this melancholy object. There stood Jesus, spent and bloody, with a purple robe hanging about him, his face besmeared and bruised by their insults, a coarse reed in his hands, and about his head hung the leaves of the thorns dropping with his blood. Pilate condescended to intreat them to consider the already very piteous case of the man; but this only inflamed their rage; and the High Priests openly renewed their menaces, that they would represent him as an enemy to Cæsar, for not putting to death, at their information, a dangerous man, who had set up to be King, and had a considerable

John xix. 4,
&c.

ver. 12.

ble faction. The people growing more outrageous, as if they would make good their clamours by open force, and the Governor having no farther hopes of

Matth.

xxvii. 24, 25.

saving Jesus, and his conscience not permitting him to confirm the sentence, he asked the multitude, Whether, then, they would take on themselves the guilt of putting this innocent man to death? They, as if impelled to hasten on towards their approaching chastisement, cried out, That his blood might be on them and their children.

Pilgrim. That was imprecating on themselves a terrible judgment.

Cleophas. Thus, you see, Son, it is no wonder that there should have been such bloodshed and massacres here. On this, Pilate, calling for water, having washed his hands, as a figure of being clear of guilt, prepared to pronounce the sentence. Oh! to recollect how he sat on the tribunal, and Jesus standing before him, surrounded with spears and halberds, amidst the noisy rage of the people, draws a flood of tears from me. It was near noon, and the Sun shone out very brightly, joy flushed in the High Priests faces; others, again, shewed a deep concern when the sentence was pronounced, for to the very last Jesus's friends had hopes of his being set at liberty.

Now the run was towards Golgotha hill, which you see yonder, on the west side of the city; all were for seeing such a sight; some ran along shouting,

Matth. xxvii.

31.

Mark xv. 10.

John xix. 17.

others followed dejected, and some were carried by mere curiosity; Jesus they compelled to drag along his cross on his shoulders, which were still sore with the scourging; you must think how painful this was to his exhausted body, bending under an unweildy cross; but the great aggravation of his distress was to see the sorrow of his mother and dearest friends, too strong to be concealed: Here Pilate appeared on horseback, with the chief men of the Council, there glittered javelins, halberds,

A. D. 34. *a* PILGRIM and CLEOPHAS. 245

halberds, and other weapons, yonder followed the murderers, with ghastly visages, tottering under their crosses, and with them the executioners, with ropes, nails, pincers, hammers, ladders, and the other implements of their dreadful profession; Jesus, by the way, sunk under his cross; on which the officers forced a countryman, who was coming into Jerusalem, to help him. All the cry every where was, Jesus of Nazareth is to be crucified; let's go and see it; ay, let's make haste; now we shall see whether he will release himself, or who knows what miracles he may perform. Very far were the poor creatures from having any thoughts of the calamitous destruction of this city, now so near, and which Jesus, even in these extreme sufferings, warned them of; and thus was he at last brought to the spot where he was to be crucified, and which was all covered with skulls and bones.

Matt. xxvii.

32.

Mark xv. 21.

Luke xxiii.

26.

ver. 27-31.

Pilgrim. That must, truly, have been a very affecting sight; the bare relation of it makes the tears stand in my eyes.

Cleophas. To me, I own, it is planting a dagger in my heart; and all who had any love for Jesus were very powerfully affected at his passion.

Matt. xxvii.

33, &c.

Mark xv. 22,

&c.

Were I to relate every circumstance; how they stretched out his hands and feet, and drove large nails through them; how the blood gushed out; the pain the raising up of the cross gave him; how, to get the cross upright, some pulled with cords, others heaved with levers; his unparalleled patience; his fervent prayer for his enemies, even when on the cross, yet they, in his thirst, gave him only vinegar and gall: I say, were I to dwell on these and other circumstances, I should faint under the relation, especially to think how few shewed any concern at what

Luke xxiii. 34.

should have excited an universal lamentation. Oh! when I think on that wanton mocking—

Pilgrim. How, Father, so very few affected at the sufferings of so good a man!

Matt. xxvii.

39—44.

Mark xv.

29—32.

Luke xxiii.

35, 36, 37,

39.

Cleophas. Every one seemed to exert himself in adding to his sufferings, from the High Priests to the soldiers, even to the malefactors, who were also under the same agonies of death. Nothing was heard on all sides but hooting, mocking, and railing.

As to Caiaphas, he looked as stately and supercilious as if now above all mischance, with all his enemies under his feet; but he and all his instruments, when the Romans came to invest the city, found whom they had thus wantonly insulted. Some, how-

Matt. xxvii.

45.

Mark xv.

33.

Luke xxiii.

44.

ever, began to relent and fear, when, in broad day, it became suddenly so dark, that the stars might be distinguished, and this when, by the course of nature, there could be no eclipse, the sun being in Aries and the moon in Libra; and accordingly Dionysius the Areopagite, a pagan philosopher, and well versed in astronomy, being then in Egypt, and observing this obscurity, declared that either the God of Nature was suffering, or the world was at an end.

This supernatural effuscation of the sun struck the bystanders with exceeding consternation, some beating their breasts, others hastening back, all scared, into the city. Some cried aloud for pardon of their crimes, and

particularly one of the criminals executed with him; and the benign Jesus was pleased to comfort him with a view of

Paradise. Indeed, none shewed themselves more inflexible and hardened than the men of rank and literature. They, who should have been shining luminaries, were blind as moles.

Pilgrim. Was it any thing strange, Father, that they should not know him to be the true Messiah?

For,

For, as I understand from you, the power or authority appeared in him, he was hung on the cross, between two vile malefactors, the Roman Chiefs, with a body of the military standing by; he was forsaken, they guarded; he was railed at, they praised; he was despised, they honoured. Who, indeed, would conceive a man in a low station, a servant, nay, an executed person, tortured to death, to be a King? To me they do not seem to have been so very much in the wrong: But I submit to better information.

Cleophas. I should also think more favourably of them, had not this been foretold by the Prophets: For not one single circumstance is there of the Passion, which they have not clearly and particularly mentioned. The treacherous selling of Jesus, together with the price, were predicted to Zachariah: His being scourged, mocked, despised, and undergoing other contumelious treatment, even to his being crucified between two criminals, are taken notice of by Isaiah. David says, "That they should give him gall and vinegar for a cordial, that they should shake their heads at him, that they should cast lots on his garments, pierce his hands and feet, stretch out his body, so that all his bones might be told; he also foretells his being forsaken on the cross, and many other things, all precisely fulfilled." This they must have read, or heard, daily; yet acted as if they gave no credit to it; besides, there are two things, by which their consideration should have been awakened.

Zach. xi. 12.

Isaiah liii.

David says,

Psal. xxii.
lxix.

First, The phenomena or signs: For, as was said, the Sun was darkened for three hours: Afterwards, when he gave up the ghost, the earth quaked, the rocks burst, even mount Calvary, as you may still see, split in the middle quite through, the graves opened, and the dead rose; and other signs never known before.

Matth xxvii.

51, 52, 53, 54.

Mark xv. 38.

39.

Luke xxiii.

45, 46, 47.

The rich veil, curiously embroidered with purple, blue and red silk, seventy five cubits long and sixteen broad, which hung at the entrance of the Temple, was rent in two. If these signs could work conversation in the Heathens, surely the Jews should not have been insensible to them; for it is as if I now saw, how pale and amazed the Commander of the soldiers and others were at these prodigies, slowly moving off, with their heads hanging down.

Secondly, His innocence, his irreproachable virtue and tender humanity, should have acquitted him; for after all their artifices, and the severity of their prosecution, no cause of death was found in him; yet did they one and all sentence him to die, and would hear of no mitigation, which was downright wickedness in the abstract; that I still say, when I recollect how dismally he hung on the cross, his limbs every way swoln, his hands and feet running with blood, the John xix. 43. gash in his side, his cadaverous face sinking in death, the lamentations of his relations, and those to whom he was more intimately known, or who had been relieved by his healing power, it is no wonder that such a city, which could insult over the sufferings of such a person, should be overthrown: And all concerned, especially the chief actors of such inhuman proceedings, come to a violent or disgraceful end.

Pilgrim. Was that the case, Father?

Cleophas. They fell by each others hands; Judas Matth. xxvii. was the first example; for seeing the consequences of his treachery, he went and Acts i. 18. hanged himself on a tree, and by a fall his bowels bursting out sent forth a horrid stench, as if testifying the foul depravity of the soul. Five years after Pontius Pilate was, by the Emperor of Rome, banished into France, where he stabbed himself: Herod Antipas, who, besides beheading John, contributed to the aggravation of Christ's sufferings, was, as has been noticed, together with the adulteress *Herodias,*

Herodias, obliged to remove into France; where they died in an ignominious obscurity. Annas and Caiaphas also received their reward. I myself saw multitudes of famous Doctors and Jewish Nobles, of whom some had sat in the Council against Jesus, scourged and crucified by Florus, a Roman Judge, their wives and children being put to death before their eyes; the number was said to exceed three thousand. Oh! there is no such thing as expressing the horrible doings of these times. The tyranny of Florus was every where exclaimed against, as if he had been the only cause; but the source of all lay in the divine vengeance. It was about thirty two years after the crucifixion of Jesus. I was then in my seventy eighth year, and had seen all the preceding transactions, that you may well think whether it was not an evident assurance to me, that all these things fell on them as punishments, though looked on in a different light.

Pilgrim. But, Father, before you proceed on that head, may I ask whether you have nothing farther concerning Jesus?

Cleophas. Leave had been obtained to take his body down from the cross; which when his friends were doing, and saw the blood oozing from the wounds, knowing that he had suffered all these things without the least shadow of guilt, and what a comfort they had lost in him, their pity and affection broke out in the most passionate lamentations, as anciently at the plains of Megiddo, when good King Josiah, being slain, was taken out of his chariot all bleeding. So oppressed were their hearts, that their grief could not be restrained. There was no end of their wailings; they lamented him as a beloved only child. Indeed their grief would have been more moderate, had they thought, or believed, that he was to rise again within three days, as he actually did.

Matt. xxvii.
55, &c.
Mark xv.
40, &c.
Luke xxiii.
49, &c.

Pilgrim,

Pilgrim. Rise again, after being crucified! How, Father?

Cleophas. Yes, Son, he rose on the third day from the dead. And, without resurrection, what would have become of the whole affair?

Pilgrim. If so, pray inform me particularly of the circumstances. I shall attend to your account of it with the highest satisfaction.

Cleophas. Oh! It is a matter of great wonder and joy. But I must first acquaint you with the dejection we were under, previous to such joy. Indeed, whilst Jesus lay in the grave, all our comfort seemed to have been buried with him. Our minds were every way extremely troubled; on one hand the want of his solacing conversation, on the other his ignominious death, the outrages and tortures which accompanied his last hours. Then all our zeal seemed lost, all our labour, cares, and attendance; all we had forsaken, relations, friends, trades, expectations, substance, good name; there was no appearance of any recompence or advantage; for Jesus was dead and laid in the grave, whence none return. Besides, we saw how wretchedly things had turned out among us. Judas had hanged himself, Peter seemed quite disconsolate, and we not a little concerned at our scandalous flight; and the women were all in tears. Every one was at a loss to offer a word of comfort to another; whereas the city was full of merriment beyond common, as it seemed to us. There was feasting, dancing, singing, music, and public shews, as if by way of insult to our affliction. On this occasion also Herod and Pilate became reconciled, and invited each other to a sumptuous banquet; and their example being followed by their creatures and dependents, all the houses of the Great were scenes of riotous intemperance. The joy of Caiaphas and his tribe for this reconciliation was the greater, as now, after so many disappointments, they had got Jesus into their hands; they made him
the

the subject of their raillery at table. "Now, said they, the Nazarene's insolence has met with its due reward. It is now plain that he was an impostor, whose drift was to fish in troubled waters. That it was now over with him; and as for any fetch of his disciples, soldiers are posted at the sepulchre to defeat any thing of that kind."

Matt. xxvii.
66.

This discourse was intermixed with bursts of laughter, and applauses of their own vigilance and address; and as there were people of all ranks in the city, ludicrous songs were sung about Jesus in the public houses; which, indeed, had been prophesied by David. As for us, whenever we appeared in the streets, we never escaped some insult or other; all our former friends shunned and despised us; then the High Priests threatened us, if ever we were found holding any meetings. Thus to us this high festival, a season of universal gladness, proved a time of grief and lamentation; like orphans, deprived of a father, in whom lay all their support, and all their hopes of a liberal education.

Psal. lxxix. 12,
13.

Pilgrim. These are, to be sure, melancholy circumstances; but I long to hear the upshot, which turned your grief into exultation.

Cleophas. The relation will naturally seem wonderful; early in the morning, before any one was to be seen in the streets, some of our women rose, and taking with them some boxes of ointment, went to Jesus's sepulchre to anoint his body, in order to preserve it, according to a custom of our people; likewise of the Egyptians, and other nations. As they were crossing the fields, and talking of their dear Lord, and the Sun began to rise behind them, darting its beams on the door of the sepulchre, they were suddenly alarmed, seeing the stone removed, which had been rolled before it; on which they concluded, that

Matt. xxviii.

1.

Mark xvi. 1.

Luke xxiv. 1.

John xx. 1.

Mark xvi. 4.

the

the Pharisees had stolen his body; they stood as thunder-struck, they scarce knew what to do; Mary Magdalen, in the heat of her troubles, went back, and with a flood of tears told Peter and John what had been done; but the other women, recovering themselves, and going forward, found the grave empty, and an Angel in a glossy white vesture appeared, and acquainted them of Jesus's resurrection, telling them to make it known to the Disciples. But, alas! this was strange language to them; then they also saw the soldiers scattered about, and lying confusedly in odd irregular postures, like dead men, thrown down by a flash of lightning; the poor women were so terrified that they ran out of the sepulchre to hide themselves. Now, on Mary's information, Peter and John came to the sepulchre, but saw no apparition, and all they found in it were the mortuary linnen. Hereupon they went away, but Mary stood weeping by the grave, and stooping down towards it, saw two Angels, and afterwards Jesus himself, whom, as every circumstance concurred to the mistake, she took for the master of the garden in which the grave was; but he soon manifested himself to her. Oh, the heavenly ecstacy which swelled her affectionate heart on knowing Jesus; she fell at his feet and worshiped him, all in tears, as if her whole life, joy, comfort, and delight depended on his presence. With these glad tidings she hastened to the eleven Apostles, and all who were thereabouts, lamenting the loss of her beloved teacher. The other women, animated by this report, returned to the grave, where two Angels reproved their unbelief; and, a second time recommended to them to acquaint the Disciples that Jesus was risen from the dead; as they were now returning, filled with the most joyful assurance, he was pleased to make the

Luke xxiv. 2.

John xx. 2.

Matth. xxviii.

5, 6, 7.

Mark xvi. 8.

Luk. xxiv. 11.

John xx. 3—8.

ver. 10—17.

ver. 18.

Matt. xxviii.

8, 9, 10.

the same unquestionable manifestation of himself as to Mary Magdalen; saluting them with the most endearing affection, which spread new joy among them, and being come where the Apostles and Disciples were privately assembled, they confirmed Mary's words, by a particular account of what they had heard and seen.

Luke xxiv. 9.

Pilgrim. Wonderful things! And were they fully credited?

Cleophas. That is what you may very well ask; and I must answer, Very far from it. These reports were looked on as dreams and fancies; and the rather, as two of the Apostles had been there, and not seen any such thing. The women, however, rehearsed the words he had spoke, and described his person, his appearance, and every circumstance; also the vision of angels. But it signified nothing. These things were all attributed to female imbecillity, prone to admit such phantoms. Some inclined to believe there might be something in it; but others much questioned it; so that, if we had some small sparks of comfort, they were mixed with so much doubt and perplexity, that we did not properly know what to think of the matter.

Mark xvi.

11.

Luke xxiv.

11.

Pilgrim. Did these doubts continue long on you?

Cleophas. Would an affectionate father let his poor forsaken children cry, when he could help them? Would not a bridegroom hasten to comfort a bride, whom he saw sick through love? Would a shepherd see his sheep straying in a desert, haunted by wild beasts, and not gather them together, and lead them into a safer pasture? The sheep bleated, and the shepherd feigned not to hear; the bride was lying in tears, and the bridegroom kept himself hid; the children cried bitterly, and seemed forsaken by the father. But now came on wonderful things. Yonder to the North West, about nine miles off, is a small place called Emmaus, now in

Mark xvi.

12.

Luke xxiv.

13—32.

ruins

ruins. Thither my father and some company were going. The country looked very chearful, with corn, herbage, fig, and olive-trees; and the warbling birds, springing from spray to spray, seemed to rejoice in the enlivening radiance of the sun; for it was about noon, and a finer day never shone out of the heavens. But their hearts were too deeply impressed with sorrow and despair, to be cheared by the beauties of Nature. They concluded themselves to be totally disappointed in their hopes; they had imagined that the Messiah, promised by God, was to sit on the throne of David, subdue the Heathens, and rescue Israel from their tyrannical dominion; that he was, like Solomon, to be a pacific Prince, and rule in all wisdom and clemency; and all this they expected to have seen fulfilled in Jesus; but the event was the very reverse; the Heathens had done their will on him, had exposed him to ridicule, in the most scandalous kind of death; on the other hand, the correspondent asseverations of the women, concerning what they had seen and heard, seemed of some weight, that their minds were agitated with a thousand clashing thoughts. In the midst of these vacillations, Jesus appears, to calm their troubles and rectify their errors. At first he personated himself a stranger, and seemed quite ignorant of what had passed; they then related to him the subject of their hopes and fears, on which he gave them better instructions; that they were for having that kingdom before its proper time; that they had not thought of the cross, which, according to the Prophets, was to precede those fruitions; his words flamed in their hearts, they powerfully felt an unusual energy, yet knew not whence it came; an invisible magnet attracted their hearts to this stranger; they looked at one another, as intimating what a wonderful man he was; but the day advanced, the Sun grew low, and they came to Emmaus, when he feigned to be for going on; but they could not part with him, and he was prevailed on to go into the house,

house, and there was still seen a greater wonder: For when they had seated themselves at table, and pleased themselves with the hopes of his conversation all the evening, he raised his eyes towards Heaven, and broke the bread in such a manner, as gave them immediately to understand whom they had with them. But when, in their transport, they thought to embrace his knees, their hands met only air. Imagine their amazement; yet some ran, as if to overtake him, but no body had seen him, no opening of doors was heard, nor any print of his feet to be discerned; then they recollect the sayings of the women, and were grieved that they had slighted them, having now seen and heard Jesus, and their hearts burning with spiritual beams, which had emanated from him.

Pilgrim. Well, and did they let it rest here?

Cleophas. Very far from it; they were just like a hunter, who having got scent of a beast, rests not till he has rouzed it; they immediately hastened back to Jerusalem, recollecting, by the way; here he joined us; here he talked to us of this, there of that; yonder he was for leaving us; there, like a father, he condescended to our weakness. How dull and thoughtless were we, that we did not know him! Had we embraced him, when we felt our hearts glowing with love, possibly he had not escaped us; but there is no withstanding his divine power? If he will not be withheld, who can force him? But what have we do at Jerusalem? We may give vent to our joy, but who will believe us? Shall we not also be accounted dreamers? What proof do we bring more than the women? Some, at least, may be moved by our report, should it be only the women, who have also been witnesses of something little different. In their return to the city they seemed rather to fly than walk, and the full moon lighted them on till they were got within Jerusalem; and at length with throbbing hearts they knocked at the house, where an assembly of the Disciples was held. On their coming in, they were told, with great eagerness,

ness, that Jesus had shewn himself to Simon Peter, had comforted and strengthened him by a gracious forgiveness of his lapse, and promises of his assisting grace; then my father Cleophas and Amaon related their adventure, in which they were supported by the women, and their several relations formed a convictive harmony; yet, some were, after all, at a loss what to think; and, such is the depravity of our nature, not without some grudging that they had been overlooked in these manifestations. Thus the thick gloom of their desperation was dispersed, yet was it far from being bright sunshine with them.

Pilgrim. These, however, were wonderful relations. But did these well-meaning persons continue long under suspense?

Cleophas. No; his love longed to shew itself in more public manifestations; and, like Joseph, when unable to carry on the disguise, made himself known to his brethren, saying, "I am Joseph your brother; draw near;" so, whilst a company of the
 Luke xxiv. 36, &c.
 John xx. 19, &c.
 disciples were discoursing on Jesus, some relating one thing, some another, he appeared in the midst of them, saying, "Peace be with you." But the like fear came on them as on Joseph's brethren. One was for hiding himself, another crept into a corner, a third looked like death; and the more, it being now late at night, and all the doors close. Then they were full of the notions of ghosts and apparitions, which they had instilled into each other. For nobody had let him in, or heard any door open; yet, behold, he stood in the midst of them, no otherwise than if he had been invested with a cloud, and put it on and laid it aside at pleasure, or caused his human body to vanish in a shadow; or, at least, so blind their eyes, that they should see him only when it suited his purpose to permit himself to be seen by them. Jesus, observing their consternation, was pleased immediately to remove it, causing them

them to feel his pierced hands and feet, and asking for some meat, as a farther proof in eating it; that now, instead of an apparition, they no longer doubted of his being really risen in the same body. I leave you to imagine the tumult of joy among these disciples, having now found the supreme treasure, which they had so long been seeking, with inward sorrow, and amidst every terrifying circumstance.

Pilgrim. I myself partake of their joy. But how was it with those who, not being here, knew nothing of these things?

Cleophas. They still laboured under doubts and diffidences: But as a King goes through the several parts of his army, shewing himself to those who might apprehend he had fallen in battle, so did

Jesus; for, within a week after, he appeared in the same manner to Thomas,

John xx. 1.
26—29.

who had refused to credit the joint affirmations of all the others. He shewed him the wounds in his hands and feet, the flesh all bruised, and the lacerated sinews; also the large wound made in his side by the spear, which had reached to his heart. Again,

Ch. xxi. 1, &c.

he was seen at the sea-side by seven disciples, as they were fishing. Afterwards, as they were at table, and at many other times. But

Mark xvi. 14.

the last farewell manifestation, which he deigned to make of himself, was on a high hill in Galilee; and, as it were by appointment,

1 Cor. xv. 6.

here was he plainly seen by above five hundred of the brethren, rejoicing in so

Matt. xxviii.
16—20

glorious a removal of all their apprehensions: For the most elevating consolations flowed from him, and his appearance was more august than before.

Mark xvi.

Here, after a discourse full of the most sublime truths and affecting assurances of

15—18.
Acts i. 3—8.

his pastoral care, he gave them instructions concerning their conduct and behaviour, the preaching of the Gospel in all parts, the administration of Baptism, the

observance of all things which he had recommended to them. Thus, for forty days after his resurrection, in various places, he continued instructing his flock in the things pertaining to that kingdom, which he was to found after his ascension into heaven.

Pilgrim. How is that ascension into heaven?

Cleophas. Yes, Son, that is the kingdom which God, from eternity, promised to give him; for he is from eternity, and was an eternal King before he created the world. On this earth are only terrestrial monarchies, which, in time, are known no more; as I told you not only of the kingdom of Judah, which, after a few centuries, came to its period, but the renowned monarchies of the Persians and Greeks, and which will be the fate of the powerful empire of Rome, nothing here being permanent. For a time the things of this world seem something; but, ere long, they pass away. Herod's kingdom also is overthrown, and the city of Jerusalem destroyed. Vain were the expectations, that their earthly monarchy would be restored. God has no delight in it. He is a spiritual King, and his spiritual kingdom will he erect and for ever govern, to the joy of believers; therein fulfilling all the predictions, shadows, and figures of the Law, and introducing a better: But both, at length, concentrated in Jesus Christ, who now ruleth in the heavens. Whatever you have heard of Adam, of Noah, and of other prophecies and promises, conclude them to be now fulfilled without any farther expectation.

Pilgrim. These things appear somewhat high to me. However, let me be permitted to ask, why the generality of the Jews did not acquiesce in such supernatural and well-attested events?

Cleophas. The chief cause was in their own obstinacy; for they audaciously invented lies, not only about the death of Christ, but his resurrection. The guards, placed at the sepulchre, told them, with one mouth,

Matt. xxviii.
11-15.

of

of the earthquake there, that they were like dead men with fear, and of what had happened about the sepulchre; that, had they had any real regard for truth, here it was manifestly laid open to them. But they could not bear it, and bribed the guards to amuse the people with some forgeries of their dictating; and, with no less perverseness did they go on persecuting Christ's members, as you shall hear, and thereupon followed this dreadful punishment.

Pilgrim. Did that deceit, then, never come to Pilate's ears, that it might be duly animadverted on?

Cleophas. Yes, he heard of it; but they silenced him the same way as they had the soldiers. He, however, in a letter, laid before the Emperor Tiberius the account of Jesus, his miracles and behaviour, together with the proceedings of the Jews against him; on which the Roman Senate resolved, That he might have been classed among the Gods, if already, and without their permission, he had not been held to be a God, this being contrary to the Roman Laws. Thus it pleased God that his people should be destitute of all worldly power and support, that their increase and aggrandisement, against the rage of combined tyrants, under his sole protection, might be the more conspicuous.

Pilgrim. Well: But I long to hear more about this miraculous ascension to heaven. It strikes me exceedingly.

Cleophas. He had promised, that, as an earnest of the power he was going to reassume, and of his love to us, that we should be filled with the Holy Ghost, and, to that purpose, enjoined us to keep together, and not stir out of Jerusalem. Afterwards he assembled his disciples as a shepherd does his flock, and affectionately signified to them, that they should fix their eyes on another kingdom than what had hitherto taken up their thoughts; that the promises of God related to heaven, and not to earth; that for this end he had suffered, and was now

Luke xxiv.

49.

Acts i. 4, 5.

going before to prepare a heavenly mansion for them, to which they must attain through much tribulation.

Luke xxiv.
50.

He then walked with them to yonder small, ruined place, called Bethany; for, as I told you, there lived some of his more intimate friends: Thither his dear children resorted.

Their joy, however, was not without some cloud of grief; for they were not less attached to him than Elisha to Elijah: But he comforted them, and bade them follow him to the Mount of Olives; where stopping, he, with uplifted hands and solemn effusions of love, blessed them, as Moses blessed the twelve tribes of Israel: And whilst the disciples were absorbed in

Mark xv. 19.
Luke xxiv.
51.
Acts i. 9.

complacency and devout raptures, a bright cloud came down, and, surrounding him, carried him upwards from their sight.

We looked up with the greatest amazement; our eyes were fixed on him; and our hearts, as it were, bounded with desire to follow him. Yes, had it been possible to have raised ourselves, joyfully should we have accompanied his ascension. We did

ver. 10, 11. what we could, stedfastly keeping our eyes on him and the cloud; and I know not

when we should have given over, so overpowered were we with a heavenly ecstasy, had not two men in shining apparel, or I should rather say Angels, told us, that it was in vain we continued gazing after the blessed Jesus, he being ascended into heaven, but would come again in power and glory inexpressible; which ought to be matter of great joy to us.

Pilgrim. Well, so far have I heard, and now could wish to know how that promise has been fulfilled, and its consequences.

Cleophas. Son, they were nothing less than real commencements of a new creation. The scions, first grafted within the confines of the Jewish land, are now become large trees, with branches overspreading most of the known parts of the world. In this increment,

ment, the twelve apostles have been like the twelve tribes of Israel, bringing forth seeds infinite in number, as in many figures had been predicted for so many hundred years. Now I shall relate the order in which the above promise was made good to us. Luke xxiv. 52, 53. Acts i. 12, 13, 14.

First, all our griefs being now turned to a settled tranquillity, we cheerfully left the hill and came into the city, keeping together as we had been directed, and talking of the beforementioned things; and, for our devotions, we used to meet in the upper part of the house, joining in prayers and hymns. Oh, those delightful hours! No worldly fancy or care intruded on our minds; our frames were heavenly as our exercises; we had continual intercourse with God; and, as the number of twelve had been broken by the defection of Judas, we appointed a solemn prayer for direction to fill up his place with a proper person; and the votes Acts i. 15—26.

were for Matthias, a very pious man, of the race of David; and accordingly he was ordained. At the end of ten days, being the Jewish feast of Pentecost, when every one appeared at Jerusalem with his offering, all the houses were cap. ii. 1—4.

full of people, and the streets every where swarmed, a wonderful thing came to pass. A strong, yet pleasing blast was heard; a storm, but not a tempest; a sound, but not like that of Moses on the Mount, which struck with terror all who heard it. Oh, blissful sound! Behold, the Holy Ghost filled our hearts with inexpressible ardour, and an unanimous love of God. In each of us he inspired a different sort of language, setting forth the great things of the kingdom of heaven; that, however discordant the sounds were, the sense harmonized, and we ourselves were astonished at the sweet impulse of the Spirit, which, being above all human comprehension, made a great noise in the city. “Let us go, said one to another, and see the wonders done on the Galileans, a parcel of illiterate

men, some only fishermen, and now talking all foreign languages as readily as if they had been born in the country. The people also are much affected with the doctrines they preach, so as to confess their sins, and

ver. 5—12.

desire to live and die with those men. Multitudes repaired to us, that the place was extremely crouded. They saw us filled with joy unaccountable; they heard us speaking of wonderful things. Some, like ourselves, were lifted up to heaven, and seemed to listen with ecstasy; others stood as astonished, at a loss what to think; whilst some ran-

ver. 13.

corous Jews gave out that we were drunk. But Peter, rising up and looking round on the croud of people, as their eyes were all fixed on

ver. 14—36.

him, preached to them; first, shewing, that what they wondered at was not drunkenness, but a gift from the Father of lights, and which had been prophesied of. He then proceeded to prove the resurrection of Christ, and exhorting to repentance all who had been in any wise accessory to the crucifying him, or had given their votes for it, that they might obtain remission. He cut asunder

ver. 37—41.

their hearts as with a two-edged sword, and harrowed it up as a field. Penitential tears gushed from the eyes of many of the audience, who all trembling asked what they should do to expiate their enormities: On which, having professed themselves believers, they, as Christ had directed, were baptized. Then, quitting the Pharisees and all infectious company, they associated themselves to the believers; and the sanctity of their succeeding life was a sure pledge, that their former offences were done away. Oh! had you seen the emotions of weeping and lamentation, then of joy that they were admitted into such society! And so great was the effect of Peter's preaching, that our small number of a hundred and twenty in one day increased to above three thousand.

Pilgrim. Oh, wonderful increase in so short time?

Cleophas.

Cleophas. As for the number, Son, that was of no great concern, had not a very remarkable change followed. I may well call it remarkable: For they were all become as one. They seemed to have but one soul, one heart, and one mind; as a thousand grains of corn made into one loaf, and thus no longer distinguishable; or as if several billets were taken to make a fire, the more billets were taken the larger the fire; yet would it still be but one fire, though consisting of so very great a congestion of billets. So were all these, by the fire of the Spirit, fused into one sentiment; that in all were seen but one heart, one soul, one inclination, one hope, one love, one joy. Oh, the retrospect on those golden times!

Pilgrim. Does that also draw forth your tears?

Cleophas. Oh! why should they not flow? Such a work was then wrought, so shining a reformation in mankind. It seemed no other than a renewal of Paradise. All the depravity which Cain and Nimrod had introduced in the creation, was now rectified. The lambs played with the wolves, the goats with the leopards; the voracious lion eat straw like the gentle ox; the cow and bear grazed by each other; the young child safely laid its little hand on the serpent's hole; and on the hill of the Lord there was neither hurt, nor sorrow, nor sin.

Pilgrim. These things are too wonderful for me to understand, without some explanation.

Cleophas. You must know then, Son, that Cain was the first who divided the land into certain parcels, and distinguished possessions, that soon one came to say, "This is mine, that is yours; thus far you may come, but have a care of coming any farther, for there begin my bounds." Afterwards came Nimrod, who first built fences and castles, was for lording it over every one, made war on all who would not submit to his usurpations, and was too successful in his violences. Hence it came, that some, like wiley serpents, day and

night were devising how to heap up money, and, with the law on their side, to say, "This is mine:" And, on any opposition, to strike their poisoned hook into the claimant, or at least to give them such a vindictive look, that the poor well-meaning lambs dropped their pretensions, fearing to have any thing to do with such venomous creatures. Others, like ravenous wolves and bears, with lawless outrage fell on the harmless sheep, kine, and other gentle and useful creatures, tearing them to pieces, or reducing them in numerous flocks under their tyrannical dominion, saying that all was theirs, the pastures on which they fed, their wool, milk, and their very bodies. Thus avarice, under the colour of justice and property, became the root of all evil; as hence frequently arose variances, hatred, envy, and murder, to the extreme oppression of the innocent creatures, who, agreeably to the universal bounty of the Creator, were disposed to friendship, kindness, and sociality, contented with a little grass in the summer, a little hay in the winter, just what was necessary to the support of life.

Pilgrim. I understand your similitude. And so these disorders were now rectified, and a better state of things took place.

Cleophas. Yes; a most blessed alteration was seen: For no sooner did that sanative power of the Spirit begin to work in the heart, than the venomous nature was expelled. The avaricious became quite other men, sympathizing and liberal. Instead of being wrapped up in their rents, their trade, the improvement of their money; instead of quarrels, complaints, and suits; instead of sourly turning their faces from the poor and needy; instead of being solicitous about food and cloathing, they now opened their chests; they cancelled those bonds, by which they were grinding the faces of the poor; nay, what is far more, they sold off their merchandize, their lands and houses, every part of their substance, and, with transports of joy, brought the
the

the money to be sunk in the common stock. They would not so much as take on them to say, It was theirs; but thought it rather belonged to the poor than to themselves, having first defrauded them of it, and then, through hard-hearted penuriousness, kept it useless in their chests. Here it was seen, that charity is the band of all perfection, as bringing all disparity of rank and fortune to a level, and melting the hearts of many into one. Its effects were, at this time, indeed, very singular. All processes were superseded; all variances subsided; the courts of justice were less crowded. They who before had sucked the blood of the quiet artisan, and to their oppressions added a fullen arrogance of behaviour, now assisted and relieved them with a brotherly cordiality. The sheep and kine no longer feared the serpent and basilisk. Their nature was changed. The ravenous tigers and wolves, whose nature before prompted them to bite, tear in pieces, and devour, came like the tame sheep and cow, and suffered themselves to be handled, without any rage or fierceness. It grieved them that, by the wretched infatuations of pride, they had so long acted the part of those savage animals. The vicious of all kinds felt the same blessed change. All who professed the name of Christ distinguished themselves by purity, simplicity, probity, courtesy, benevolence, and liberality. Oh, the moral Sechinah, which was then seen on the Mount of the Lord.

Pilgrim. What a joy must that have been to the innocent, who had lain crushed under the load of oppression, or squeezed by the gripe of avarice!

Cleophas. It was no otherwise with them, than a sudden removal from the distresses of a prison to the enjoyments of a palace; for we met almost every evening, where a common table was spread. One brought bread, another flesh, another wine or some smaller liquor; and one of the most considerable persons in the assembly, with an air of benignity, proclaimed,

claimed, "Brethren, let us thank and praise God, who giveth us plenty of all things necessary. Let none be concerned about his poverty: Here all reasonable wants shall be supplied from the free source of Christian love. The givers rejoice more than the receivers. There we sung hymns; there we poured forth prayers; there we discoursed on the love of God in Christ Jesus, love which passeth all knowledge, by which the divine Son was given up to death, as a redemption for all; and he, who was rich, for our sakes became poor. We ate our food with gladness and cordial sociableness. Our hearts, like a loaf, were kneaded into one, and inseparably united; that nothing of duplicity, envy, or imperiousness was seen amongst us. We were all love, candour, and joy; our meals were seasoned with edifying discourse; and, with hearts full of consolation and the fruit of the love of the Spirit, and nourished in soul and body, we all returned to our homes rejoicing, exercising ourselves in devotion and good works. These feasts accordingly were called feasts of love.

Pilgrim. A heaven upon earth! But did not some tokens of grudging and anxiety escape the wealthy, when they saw their substance thus daily diminishing, and irretrievably sunk in the common fund? Or did not the poor become licentious, and forget the humility becoming that state, when they saw such condescension in the rich, and so plentifully partook of their liberality? for it was really no more than what might naturally be apprehended?

Cleophas. As to the former, the rich being, by the renewing grace of the Spirit, taught to desire nothing beyond mere necessities, their cares, of consequence, lay within small bounds. Besides, they saw the divine hand so manifestly co-operate for the supply of this community, that there was always an increasing plenty: And none being disposed to idleness, but employing themselves in a moderate industry, (for the incessant application to wordly business so much commended is really

really blameable,) you must necessarily think that the gain of many, under good management, might much easier subsist a people, than where great numbers are drained to the utmost, and a few live in luxury or an ostentatious profusion of their ill-acquired wealth, not to mention the disorderly procedures among both poor and rich, which, by our œconomy, were avoided; for many dwelling together live at a less expence than a few separately. But the chief article was, that they had offered themselves and all their substance to the Lord, by whom they were promised a supply in all their wants, and relief in all their necessities. They also well remembered that Jesus, the captain of their salvation, had led a life of self-denial and lowliness, alienated from all indulgence and splendor, and had strongly recommended it to his followers; and thus, the more to resemble him, they preferred poverty to riches. As to the latter, I must inform you, that the edifying discourses and respectable examples, which ever accompanied our repasts or common meetings, spread such an awe among all, that not an indecent word or action came from any: The consequence would have been expulsion. Besides, those of a licentious disposition scorned our dull meetings. Like will to like; and libertines in the company of the godly are as uneasy as in the stocks. Indeed, the power of the Spirit was mighty over all, and had formed all into one amiable mass, duly tempered and clarified, without any heterogeneous reliet.

Pilgrim. Oh delightful society! I wonder all were not attracted to become members! Of what benefit is a wise œconomy among a numerous people, especially when under God's special superintendency.

Cleophas. That you may very well say: Acts v. 1—11.
For a husband and wife among us sold
their goods; but, desirous of reserving a particular
hoard for themselves, delivered to the Apostles, as the
whole, only a part of the money arising from the sale;
when,

when, behold, by the bare word of Peter, both were punished with death. Scarce had the husband's body been carried out, when the wife coming in, fell down lifeless at the feet of the Apostle, which brought great terror on the hearts of the believers; for they saw with whom they had to do; and this farther contributed to the maintenance of good order and liberality, without any clandestine reserves.

Pilgrim. Wonderful!

Gleophas. Such were the workings of
Acts iv. 4.

God in this society; and by which it soon increased from three to five thousand. Not only the commonalty, but Priests officiating in the temple, embraced the faith, each saying to the other, "Come, let us go up to the mount of the Lord, to the house of the God of Jacob and ours; for there is seen the glory of the Lord, as foretold by the Prophets." The synagogues of the Pharisees were confounded; for it was

Acts iii.
1-10.

publicly manifest that the lame were enabled to leap, the blind received sight, lepers were healed, and all diseases cured, only by calling on the name of Jesus, nay, even by the shadow of the Apostles passing over the patients; whereby the multitude were stirred up to great wonder

and thankfulness. They now clearly saw
Chr. v. 11, 12.

the power of the Lord, the injustice and cruelty of the priests in crucifying Jesus, and for which they were not a little hated by the people. The maimed and diseased, who had been healed, were pointed at. "Yon man was lame from his cradle, and used to beg at the temple-gate; now you see he has no need of crutches. This was done by Jesus of Nazareth, who, when living, went over all this country, and wrought many such wonders. Could you think it? This good man our Priests procured to be crucified, as a sower of sedition. You may think what sort of persons they are." A great deal of such talk went about.

Pilgrim.

Pilgrim. But how did the Pharisees behave, amidst these clamours?

Cleophas. The fire of envy burned in their entrails; they were like the raging sea, and with implacable perversity, though convinced of the truth, they opposed the Apostles, and threatened them with the severest punishments, if they did not give over preaching to the people in the name of Jesus. Acts iv.

Pilgrim. From the promises, I conclude, however, that their threats did not damp the Apostles zeal.

Cleophas. It was only fuel to the fire; they continued their meetings; and once, when engaged in prayer, the house trembled and shook; a manifestation of the extraordinary presence of the Spirit: Every heart was strengthened, and flamed with new ardour to propagate the Gospel; they declared what they had seen and heard; their regard to God and man would not permit them to smother or disguise the truth, and signs and wonders accompanied their preachings. The High Priests, irritated at this contempt of their orders, held a consultation, what measures should be taken with the Apostles; and sent their guards to apprehend them and commit them to prison; but the next morning, how were they amazed, amidst all their pontifical state, when word was brought, that the very same men stood preaching in the Temple, and how they got out of the prison was unknown, the doors being locked and bolted, the guards at their posts, yet the inward prison empty; thus wonderfully had God, by an Angel, delivered his faithful servants. This Caiaphas, with his supercilious assessors, sent a courteous summons to the Apostles to attend the Council, who with a feigned mildness advised them, and with some menacing intimations recommended to them, to keep their new doctrines to themselves; but the Apostles, soon leaving the Council, returned to the great work committed to them, by their

Acts v. 17 —
42.

their heavenly Master; on which, the Priests, had not a wise man interposed, were for putting them to death; and did not dismiss them without being bound to pillars, and scourged, and turned out of the city; sufferings which they rejoiced in as similar to those of Jesus. So much did grace exalt them above natural sensations.

Pilgrim. Could they be so hardened, as still to persevere in their outrages against those good men?

Cleophas. Cruel as this was, would they had gone no farther; but not long after they committed a horrible murder, on a man of fervent holiness, named Stephen,

Acts vii. 1, 5.
— 60.

only for his free reproofs of their wickedness, dragging him without one of the city gates, where they stoned him, though on his knees he prayed, for them; prayed that the inhuman sin they were then guilty of might be forgiven; till his body, being every where broken and bruised, he yielded up his spirit to God, who had graciously supported him with a sight of his master Jesus, encircled with heavenly glory, as he himself declared to his persecutors; but they were not in the least impressed by such a miracle.

Pilgrim. Why a blind man could see that vengeance must soon follow such impious barbarities.

Cleophas. They, however, had no sense of this; on the contrary, they inculcated into their youth, that to put a heretic to death, and such they accounted us,

Acts viii. 1, 5.

was a good action. From this prepossession, a youth, otherwise of great parts and a generous disposition, named Saul, a native of Tharsus, but now a student in the Schools of the Pharisees, was very active in such persecutions, and, accompanied by others of the same stamp, forced his way into houses, dragging both men and women to prison; some hauled out of their beds, one from his loom, another from the anvil, another from his workshop, or timber, or tan yard; or wherever they were,

were, a Christian knew not where to hide his head ; many, agreeable to their master's advice, fled to the neighbouring towns ; that society, lately so tranquil and flourishing, seemed now to-
 ver. 4.
 tally scattered and confounded.

Pilgrim. It was a wonder, all did not go to wreck. How could a flock of sheep subsist, when daily worried by a troop of merciless wolves ? And I do not hear that any opposition was made to such tyrannical procedures.

Cleophas. True, Son. They neither handled spear nor shield. Their resource, as Jesus had enjoined, was only in supplications to him who has the hearts of men in his hand.

Pilgrim. Then, as I said, it is a wonder that your religion was not totally extirpated, without so much as a single branch remaining.

Cleophas. Know, Son, that what God plants it is not in man's power to root up. Wonderfully has he fought against these enemies, causing their own darts to revert in their faces ; for all these persecutions served to the more extensive propagation of the Gospel. Yes, faith thrives and increases under the cross. Worldly distresses lift up the heart to heavenly things. Oh ! were I to relate to you some passages—

Pilgrim. And, I pray, do ; for I delight to hear of the singular operations of grace, and the magnanimous behaviour of the servants of God.

Cleophas. The zeal of believers, after their dispersion in various towns and villages, was not damped. They still declared the wonderful things which they had heard and seen. Northward, on a very delightful hill, in a fertile, well-cultivated country, stands a town, once famous under the name of Samaria, now called Sebaste, full thirty miles from hence. Philip, a zealous follower of Christ, coming hither, was
 ver. 5, &c.
 much affected at seeing how wretchedly the inhabitants were imposed on by one Simon, a
 forcerer

forcerer, set about counteracting him ; but instead of frivolous prestiges, by miraculous cures, the cripple walked off with his crutches on his shoulders ; the blind wanted no guide ; the deaf, now distinguishing things by hearing, was, as it were, in another world ; the possessed were quiet without bands or fantastic exorcisms. The whole town flocked to see such wonders, which quite eclipsed all Simon's arts, so that great numbers with ecstasy entered into society with these emigrants ; and I want words to express the devotion, the love, the heavenly-mindedness, which animated both men and women, after being washed in the laver of baptism. Simon, seeing all his wickedness frustrated, and what mighty things were done by the Apostles, was so senseless as to offer them money to invest him with the like power ; and hence it is, that endeavours to obtain any office in the church of Christ by money, or any indirect means, (for Satan hath ever had his instruments at work,) are termed Simony.

Pilgrim. It must have been a great consolation to the oppressed believers at Jerusalem, when they heard of these glorious consequences of the dispersion.

Cleophas. God also was pleased, Son, to extend the knowledge of his Gospel by the ministration of Angels. Yonder, at a great distance south-westward, lies the old town of Gaza, on a high road leading to Egypt. The adjacent country was anciently in the hands of the Philistines, those inveterate enemies to the Israelites : Afterwards it was laid waste by the Idumeans, another savage set of people. Along this road an

ver. 26, &c. Ethiopian nobleman was travelling at his ease on his return from Jerusalem, and, being an impartial searcher after truth, and strongly impressed with the sense of a future life, was attentively reading the book of Isaiah ; when suddenly he saw by his chariot a man, transported thither from Samaria by an Angel. Their hearts mutually attracted each other ; each seemed to know the thoughts and dispositions ;
that

that the Nobleman took the stranger into his chariot. Their talk was not of the weather, war, or public affairs, but of the one thing needful, of what appertains to salvation. At length, coming to a clear piece of water, they both with tears of joy alighted, and the Moor was washed from the spots of his natural conscience; his swarthy hue was spiritually attired with the resplendent garment of righteousness. He now had perceptions and joys, far transcending any thing he had felt in his philosophical disquisitions. But with what astonishment was he seized, at seeing his instructor carried from him in a cloud! Recovered from his transport, he continued his journey through deserts and over parching sands, shortening the tediousness of the way with reading and meditation. To him those remote lands of the torrid zone owe the light of the Gospel, and the solution of Solomon's riddles, a book highly venerated among them, and held in general inexplicable by man.

Pilgrim. Your narrative grows a series of wonders.

Cleophas. And what you are going to hear is little less. There is also another town on the Salt Sea, a considerable way off to the north-west, called Cæsarea, in honour of the Emperor Augustus Cæ- Acts x.
sar; and nine miles from this, along the

same coast, another town, called Joppa. In these two different towns, two persons were at once made known to each other. What one met, stood before the other's eyes. A heavenly operation impelled one heart towards the other; and this also through the ministration of Angels. "Then were seen the beautiful feet of heavenly messengers leaping over the mountains. The south-wind of the Gospel agitated the hearts of great numbers. The spices blowed; the flowers appeared on the earth; the pomegranates budded; the vine, with its tender grapes, gave a grateful smell; the voice of the turtle dove was heard in the land; the foxes, which spoiled the vineyards, were gently caught

in their own devices." Their mischievous craftiness turned to innoxious meekness. They now seemed to be lambs, instead of foxes. "The swords were turned into plough-shares, and the spears into reaphooks." An unarmed fisherman pierced to the very inmost parts, and "clave asunder the joints and marrow," more powerfully than warriors with all their instruments of carnage. Wherever he preached, he was surrounded by amazing crouds, all attentive, and some shedding tears of joy, others of contrition. On professing their faith in Jesus as the Son of God, and the propitiation for the sins of the world, they were baptized into his death and the communion of the Saints. Oh! Son, "kine and bears came and fed in one pasture; their young ones laid down together." It may almost be said, that, through the sweet sound of the Gospel, the hills, woods, and fields met.

Pilgrim. But, as the Gospel thus spread on every side, did not the persecutions also increase? You mentioned a young man of some note, who made it his business to ferret out believers, that they might be put to death. Was he not exasperated to see his activity baffled? Did he not enter on more effectual measures? Or did these disappointments cool his rage?

Cleophas. That very young man, Saul, was also converted; and most wonderful are the circumstances of his conversion. He had continued to distinguish himself as a persecutor of the believers; and, by his means, many came to an untimely end. Such zeal the

Acts ix.
1-19. High Priest rewarded with a commission to go to Damascus, and what believers he should find there, women and men, to bring them to Jerusalem bound or manacled. He was on the road, and not a little elevated with his new commission, which he had determined to discharge in the most rigorous manner, as most pleasing to his constituents, and the way to farther favours; when, behold, a supernatural light beamed on him. He trembled all over;

over; his spear fell out of his hand; his sight failed, and he sunk to the ground. His attendants stood as thunder-struck at this sudden deliquium, looking one at another, till they raised him up and led him along, faint and drooping; when he received inwardly a very different commission from the former, with a reproof of his cruelty. Now he was to ask forgiveness of those he had purposed to manacle; and by those, whom he looked on as blind, his sight was to be restored. After the end of three days, emerging from this state of perturbation, with the vivacity of ver. 20, 21, 22. an eagle he went to the synagogue at Damascus, and openly preached Jesus, to the great joy of believers and the confusion of their enemies, who were no strangers to his character. You must think also how the Priests of Jerusalem were mortified, when, instead of the waggons full of prisoners, the guards came with their ensign trailing on the ground, as a token of bad news, and related what had befallen Saul, and the change it had wrought in him. Caiaphas and the whole council were struck all of a heap, knowing Saul's sagacity and resolution, and his indefatigable zeal in whatever he took in hand.

Pilgrim. That was, indeed, a home defeat to the Priests and Pharisees! But were the believers, in other towns, suffered to live quietly?

Cleophas. Whatever their treatment was, they continued to meet. Oh, their ecstatic hymns! their elevating discourses! Their meetings, to be sure, were like the dew of Hermon; like the precious ointment which, running down from Aaron's head, descended to the skirts of his garments. The joys, which swelled every heart, are above the power of language. "The mountains dropped with luscious wine, the hills flowed with milk, and all the rivers were full of water.

Pilgrim. But Saul, as his conversion was so very singular, I suppose, proved an eminent instrument in propagating the Gospel, and omitted nothing to build

up what he had been so eager in demolishing; in which, persecution would be sure to point all its bolts against him.

Cleophas. Your suppositions are perfectly right; but really his adventures and sufferings in the cause of Christ were so various, that, of themselves, they would make up a distinct narrative. I shall, however, give you a cursory account of his life, yet sufficient to lead you into his character and conduct; with a specimen or two of his intrepid attachment to that God, who had so miraculously called him from darkness into light. The first journey he took after his conversion was into Arabia, whence he returned to Damascus, then proceeded to Jerusalem, every where preaching Christ, and every where the butt of ruthless persecutors, on whom the amiable innocence and simplicity of the believers could make no favourable impression.

Gal. i. 17. Once he was let down the city wall in a basket; another time some blood-thirsty bigots lay in ambush for him. Sometimes he was obliged to secrete himself in deserts and lonely places, or commit himself to the sea, where more than once he was in great danger. In a word, distress, insult, and perils, haunted him almost wherever he went.

Acts ix. 25. On his coming to Jerusalem, as I was saying, perceiving that, of all others, the Jews were most intent on doing him some mischief, he removed to the place of his nativity, Tharsus in Cilicia, with a design of concealing himself a while; but a brother, named Barnabas, thinking that by the retirement of such a luminary the Gospel might suffer, went thither, and brought him away to Antioch, where now were Saul, since called Paul, Barnabas, Lucius, Nigger, and Manaen. They set up schools for lectures on the *Christian Philosophy*, as some termed the Faith. These were much frequented; and here believers

Acts ix. 25.
2Cor. xi. 32,
33.
Acts ix. 30.
Acts xi. 25,
26, 27.
Ch. xiii. 1.

believers first got the name of Christians. From Antioch, as a center, they spread out on all sides. Paul travelled through Cyprus, Pamphilia, Pisidia, Iconia, and visited, among many other towns, Lystra and Derbe. If in one he met with any friendly reception, in others he was scourged, imprisoned, and driven out, with the most opprobrious outrages; and in all this the Jews were the chief actors, blindly laying the foundation of their signal extinction. Alas! there is no telling what he underwent: But himself strongly supported, he every where strengthened the brethren; and in the assembly of the Apostles and other principal believers, held here within Jerusalem in the tenth year of the Emperor Claudius, he gave shining proofs that he was not one of the least. Afterwards he continued his labours all over Galatia, Bithynia, and Macedonia, and went to the city of Athens, at that time famous for literature. Here he put all the Philosophers to a stand. His doctrines were such, as they had never heard of before. They stood amazed at what they could not refute. Corinth, another celebrated city, also felt the force of his wisdom, shewing that in reality their sages were fools. Many acknowledged themselves such, and closed with his reasonings, becoming fools in the eyes of the world. At Ephesus, which had a great trade for silver models of the temple of Diana there, one of the seven wonders of the world, a violent tumult was raised against him; as, should his doctrine get footing, their lucre would be at an end. All Greece was moved at the miracles and doctrines of Paul. Italy, Spain, Dalmatia, Illyricum, and many parts of Germany, were witnesses of them. The churches he founded, the souls he converted, and especially the miracles he performed, are beyond number. At one place they were going to sacrifice to him, as to a God

ver. 4, 13, 14.

15.

Ch. xiv. 6, 7.

Chap. xv. 6.

Chap. xvi. 6,

7, 12.

xvii. 1, 15.

Ch. xviii. 1.

Chap. xix.

Ch. xvi. 18.

xx. 12.

xiv. 10.

xiii. 6, &c.

xix. 12, &c.

xvi. 25, &c.

in a human figure, till he undeceived them in a speech ; and then their veneration turned to insult. Were I to tell you of his colleagues or assistants, as Barnabas, Timothy, Titus, Silas, Apollos, Lucas, Epaphras, Aristarchus, Clemens, Tychicus, Epaphroditus, Aquila, Priscilla, and many others, time would fail us. It gives me pleasure to think on their zeal, their tenderness, their sweet conversation and heavenly discourse. Oh, how many nights did they spend in prayer, in sweet consolatory discourse on the conduct of their lives, the riches of grace, and the expectation of things eternal ; prelibations of the heavenly felicity ! From which no worldly concerns diverted them, nor relish of earthly fruitions adulterated their inward solacements. Often was he detained by the intreaties of their love ; and tears and embraces always attended his departure. Are you desirous of fuller information ? Then peruse his letters, which at this time he wrote to several churches, and are carefully read by us in our meetings. These bear witness to his zeal for the glory of God, his concern for souls, and to the holiness of his life. I must add, that the island of Melita will ever be a monument of his miraculous power. Being shipwrecked there, and coming to a fire which the hospitable people kindled, a viper leaped out and fastened on his hand ; but he shook it off without the least hurt : And, ever since, the vipers of that island, as is well known to this day, are without any venom, that they are handled as safely as eels.

Acts xxviii.
1-6.

Pilgrim. On my word, these are no small tokens of a man sent by God, and who made it his meat and drink to do the will of his great Master.

Cleophas. During the thirty six years of his Apostleship he travelled above nine thousand miles, in the several countries above mentioned ; sometimes by water, sometimes by land ; but the latter was more agreeable

to him, on account of seeing those for whom he had a particular friendship, and likewise being more at liberty: For in passage-vessels we are exposed to a great deal of idle talk; every one has his tale, and goes through with it, whether listened to or not. Now this is a grievous disturbance to a devout man, who would be raising his mind to God, and conversing with spiritual things. Therefore a person of a religious cast and speculative turn would prefer walking through the country to sailing in a noisy ship, as there his eyes are filled with the more pleasing works of the Creator; herbage, flowers, fruits, grain, covering the lofty hill and hollow vale; objects which prompt us to praise the benign God, of whose goodness the whole earth is full. Here, free from the intrusions and ribaldry of strangers, the mind calmly reads the instructive Book of Nature, and sweetly loses itself in ravishing contemplations.

Pilgrim. That is very justly observed: But let us now, I pray, return to the Jews. How have they since behaved towards the Christians?

Cleophas. With the utmost malice and cruelty; for, besides their treatment of Paul, who, on all occasions, shewed a most tender concern for them, they left no stone unturned to rouse the secular arm against the Christians. At their instigation Acts xii. 2. it was, that King Herod threw James the elder into prison, with orders for his execution; and though the patience and mildness of this Apostle melted his very accusers, whom he kissed in token of his cordial forgiveness, yet the relentless King and Priests would not be satisfied till his head was off: Another ver. 23. heavy charge against that wretched city, and soon retaliated on Herod, in a manner which plainly spoke the hand of divine vengeance: For, when seated on a throne, in all the pomp of regality, giving audience to some Ambassadors, he was suddenly struck with a distemper which none of the Court Physicians

knew how to treat. After five days of horrible pains in his entrails, he died a miserable spectacle, eaten up by worms; and this had been foretold to him when at Rome, by a German of some rank, who was a prisoner there.

Pilgrim. The Jews must have been hardened indeed, to be insensible to such tokens.

Cleophas. There was also another a little before the death of that tyrant, and not less declarative of a divine interposition. He had caused Peter to be apprehended, with an intent that he should undergo the same fate as his fellow-labourer James. The fatal day ver. 3, &c.

came; but when the officers came to fetch Peter, all they found in the cell, where he had been secured, were the handcuffs and chains. Imagine their astonishment. Every thing looked safe; the several doors were shut; and the keepers broad awake; yet Peter was gone. This threw them all into an extreme panic, as they were to account for the escape of their prisoner, yet none knew any thing of the matter. The nature of his escape was such as stirred up a strong suspicion of bribery in the case; whereas, in reality, it was effected by an Angel. But neither Herod's dreadful end, nor this deliverance of Peter, which nobody could account for, produced any amendment; and the Pharisees continued to molest believers with all their former animosity.

Pilgrim. But how was it with the other Apostles? I suppose they did not all keep within Jerusalem.

Cleophas. No, no. One of Christ's last injunctions to them was to go through all the world, preaching the Gospel; and accordingly they did. Paul visited the western countries; Matthew went into the south; Bartholomew into India; Thomas among the Parthians; Andrew northward, among the Scythians; John into several parts of Asia. In like manner the others dispersed themselves several ways, every where diligently sowing the precious seed of the Gospel, and confirming

confirming their words by such signs and miracles as opportunity offered; and as, in several places, the worship of idols began to wear off through their preaching, this success exposed them to more violent persecutions, in which they lost their lives. But this was no more than their Master had foretold to them.

Pilgrim. One would naturally think, that the persecutions must soon have put an end to them. And did their doctrine get footing in those strange countries?

Cleophas. Yes, beyond any doctrine ever promulgated; that it was amazing to see the force proceeding from what, in the world's account, was weakness in the abstract: For all the books of Philosophy were not able in four hundred years, nor the Law of Moses in fifteen hundred, to compass what this doctrine did within forty, and this amidst the severest persecutions which the others had not to grapple with. For when was Lycurgus persecuted? when was Solon? when Pythagoras, Aristotle, or Plato? When were the Stoics and Epicureans imprisoned, scourged, and put to death? On the contrary, they had always good times, were countenanced and honoured; and the Jews, for a long time, had the crown and sceptre in their hands, and, by a superior strength, kept their enemies under. But, here, behold Jesus nailed to the cross! Behold his Apostles; one beheaded, another flayed alive, another stoned, another sawed asunder, another beaten to death with a club. Behold all, who opened their mouths in favour of the Gospel, insulted, as so many outcasts; yet did this heavenly doctrine establish itself into three parts of the world, Asia, Europe, and Africa: A good evidence, I think, of its excellency beyond Philosophy, or even the Law of Moses. But to return to my history. Among all the cruelties committed any where, a most horrible instance occurs to me in Jerusalem; and in bloodshed she exceeded all other places.

Pilgrim.

Pilgrim. And it was such an one, it seems, as draws tears from you.

Cleophas. Oh, the death of that holy man, so beloved by all, the blessed James the younger, my predecessor in this city !

Pilgrim. Why, what happened to him ?

Cleophas. The Saducees, an impious sect, denying the resurrection of the body and the existence of spirits, set on by Ananias the High Priest, laid hold of that worthy man, and, deaf to his intreaties and remonstrances, having dragged him up to the pinnacle of the Temple, cast him down into yonder deep valley. Then they proceeded to disfigure his body by stoning him ; and, as if that was not enough, a fuller, with his club, brake his skull, that his brains flew about. Many of the substantial citizens, spectators of such a continued barbarity, were so shocked at it, that they accused the said High Priest of arbitrary proceedings and encouraging riots. James was so distinguished for the gentleness of his temper and his philanthropy, that afterwards many looked on his death as one cause of the destruction of this devoted city ; but I rather think that all the innocent blood, shed in the face of the earth in the cause of Christ, (and, good God, who can recount all the massacres, executions, and murders!) was required at its hands ; and I could adduce not a few arguments in support of my opinion. But the sun draws low ; so we will refer the sequel till another time.

Pilgrim. I would not in the least incommode you, Father, and shall very willingly suspend my curiosity till to-morrow.

Cleophas. Then be mindful, Son, that I have let you into the nature and qualities of that King who was promised by the Prophets, and have given you a full account of his birth, life, death, resurrection, and ascension.

Pilgrim.

Pilgrim. You have, indeed, made me acquainted with many sublime and wonderful things, of which I was before utterly ignorant.

Cleophas. And in which you may observe what a personage he was, whose death, and a death so painful and ignominious, this city demanded with such implacable obstinacy, and that the punishment of such an atrocious crime must be very great, had the city not incurred any other guilt; as, in worldly estimate, killing a King's son is otherwise punished than the murder of a common man.

Pilgrim. The difference is certainly very great.

Cleophas. Well: And add to that, the martyrdoms of Prophets, Apostles, and their followers, a very considerable number.

Pilgrim. Indeed I am not surprized that this city has so often been a scene of carnage;—

Cleophas. Or that such a terrible destruction, as you see, has fallen on it; the relation of which must fill you with horror. But let us go; and be so kind as to see me home.

Pilgrim. I should be very ungrateful to grudge so small an office, when, to gratify me, you are at so much pains, raising and bending your aged limbs, and coming so far, the better to inform me of what I desire to hear. But how comes the way to be so rugged, all covered with broken stones, over-run with nettles, and other weeds? I wonder how you get through such a place?

Cleophas. Formerly here were stone steps, but now they are all broken down. There, at that ruined wall, began David's famous palace, called Millo. On yonder hill stood a strong citadel, built by Antiochus the tyrant; there you still see the remains of the tower of Ophel. In that angle towards the south-west stood a high tower, known by the name of Hananeel. There, before us, are some fragments of the castle of Antonia, also something of the Temple; and near it, Helena's Palace.

Palace. Yonder stood the court of justice, where the impious sentence was pronounced against Jesus. Behold its ruinous condition. Where are now their clamours and outrages? Much better had it been to have lamented their own iniquities, than accuse Jesus. There, westward, you still may see the three towers of Hippicus, Phaselus, and Mariamne. Yonder stood that temple of voluptuousness and revelry, Herod's palace. Herod prided himself not a little in having built those towers: And what are they now, but mouldering haunts of owls, bats, ravens, and daws? Thus decay all sublunary things. Now we are come to my cottage. Here I live.

Pilgrim. It is quite in character; it puts me in mind of the dwellings of the antient Patriarchs, who lived like pilgrims and strangers on earth.

Cleophas. So would I have it; and this garden subsists me; here I sow carrots, turneps, cabbages, salads, herbs, and other esculents.

Pilgrim. I see, Father, that a little satisfies you; farewell till to morrow; I must withdraw to my recess, where meditation on what I hear from you, gives me very exalted pleasure.

Cleophas. Those last words of yours will leave a pleasure on me. God night, heartily, Son.

DIALOGUE III.

PART the FOURTH.

The Destruction of Jerusalem, the overthrow of the Jewish Constitution, and the state of the Christian Church, to the 109th year of its æra; containing the space of 70 years.

Pilgrim. **B**Y the many holes and mole-hills all over this place one would think a whole army had been buried here. I must get my good old friend to let me into the occasion of them. This is his door; I hear within something of a devout modulation of his voice; so, instead of disturbing him I will proceed to the eminence, where we use to meet. What a view of stately ruins on every side, as far as the eye can reach! houses, towers, palaces, temples. This must have been a very populous and flourishing country; and yonder, a great way eastward, if I mistake not, I can discern a shining piece of water; sure that cannot be all drowned land. I wish the old man was come to clear up all these things to me. Oh, yonder he comes; stooping a little, indeed, yet, considering his great age, his senses and faculties are uncommonly clear; then his love for his native country, and zeal for promoting true religion among mankind, very much endear him to me—A good day to you, Father, the Lord be your guide and comforter.

Cleophas. I thank you, Son, for your kind salutation. I fear I have made you wait some time.

Pilgrim. Not long. I passed by your house, and concluding that you was at your devotions, I came on.

Cleophas. It is customary with us, Son, to meet early in the morning at one another's houses, to pray, sing hymns, and exhort each other to continue steadfast in the Faith, and keep ourselves unspotted from the world,
thus

hus waiting for the blessed hope, and the appearance of our Saviour Jesus Christ, who shall come again, even in the same manner at we saw him ascend; in this we use all diligence; we hold ourselves in readiness by a walk of uniform holiness, which is especially necessary in these times, when there is not an hour we can say we are safe; for since this Emperor Trajan has reigned, nothing is heard of but killing, strangling, hanging, crucifying, beheading, burning, and torturing of believers; and all this, only for quitting the worship of dumb idols, and preaching the joyful tidings of Christ, the Saviour of the world, crucified, risen, and ascended into Heaven. Thus are we always in jeopardy; we do not know at night, but we may be taken out of our beds to a sudden execution; thus you see how it behoves us to be constantly preparing ourselves for the trial.

Pilgrim. Great reason is there, indeed, that men should live as pilgrims on earth; yet I think the Emperor guilty of most execrable tyranny.

Cleophas. Happy those Princes to whom only genuine truth is represented: Trajan himself is the least to be blamed, for otherwise he is a man of excellent qualities, and very averse from any thing of cruelty; therefore is it, that this city, having been the instigation of the massacres and executions in which so much innocent blood was shed, its punishment shall come on it as a whirlwind pregnant with destruction.

Pilgrim. Before you proceed, be so kind as to tell me, what water that is yonder, a great way off, towards the east? At sun rise, the reflection of the light seemed to give it an ensanguined appearance.

Cleophas. That water, Son, should have been a warning to the city, as a terrible image of its destruction; it was antiently a fine delicious country, interspersed with olive, fig, and vineyards, corn fields, meadows, seats, and opulent cities; but the inhabitants, which is almost a natural consequence of riches, were abominably

minably voluptuous and fantastical; also haughty, and without any bowels of compassion for the distresses of the poor: And what was the result? Soon a most dreadful punishment fell on it, and that quite unexpectedly.

Pilgrim. Since I led you into this subject, be so kind as to enlarge a little on it.

Cleophas. In one of those cities lived a very worthy man, called Lot, nephew to the famous Patriarch Abraham; for in his time it all happened. The licentiousness of the inhabitants, their riotous merriments, their imprecations, their inhospitality, not to mention some abominable practices, were a perpetual grief to him; and sometimes he would mildly offer a word of advice against such doings, but they looked on him as a spiritless, saturnine creature. Two An-

Gen. xix.
1-13.

gels once came to him in the figure of men, and he received them with all possible courtesy; but when they saw the detestable wickedness of the people, they declared that God had determined to punish them, and that he must leave the city, for it would soon be destroyed. This information Lot communicated to all who were

ver. 14.

related to him, or with whom he had any particular connections of friendship; but they laughed at him, saying, "Yes, indeed, there is great likelihood of such a thing. Such an one, no longer ago than yesterday, began to build a new house. Another has sowed his ground; in that house there's a wedding to-day; to-morrow, you know, a great meeting is to be held about public affairs; take a view of the artificers, have they not all their hands full of work; never was trading so brisk; the inns are crowded with guests; we have no war, and all quiet at home; here's peace and plenty; what do you talk of destruction, then? Who will destroy us? Your head is always full of whimsies."

This pierced the good man's heart, that such important advice should be slighted.

ver. 19.

The

The Angels then directed him instantly to quit the city, with his wife and two daughters, and to go streight on, and, as they valued their lives, not to cast a

ver. 15—23.

ver. 24, 25.

look backwards on any account. Scarce were they out of the district of the city, when the sky appeared all in a flame, then came on violent thundrings, and prodigious flashes of such lightning as immediately set every thing in a blaze. There was weeping, and wailing, and ghastly looks, that their stately houses, and fine furniture, should be reduced to ashes: Others mourned after their cash; what had been the delight of their corrupted hearts, they now saw destroyed by supernatural fires; and even for themselves no shelter was left; some the flames seized, some were crushed by the fall of houses; all the produce of the country was consumed; the trees flamed; the pools and streams seemed to turn into liquid sulphur and pitch; and as in a crucible all things are fused into one mixed mass, so here, man, beast, herbage, even metals, stones, and buildings, and every thing else was transformed into a slimy lake, that nothing of its former appearance or substance was to be seen, except the rising of a thick smook or vapour, indicating that fire had destroyed every thing; thus was the voluptuousness of this city closed in utter destruction. Lot's

ver. 26.

wife also did not escape the judgment; for her heart being, amidst all these terrors, still attached to the many good things she had left, could not forbear looking back, with a lamenting eye, contrary to the Angel's express direction; ah! then she felt the evil of disobedience; her tears and lamentations for the loss of her goods availed nothing; and soon was she disabled from giving vent to her grief; sight forsook her eyes; her legs and arms stiffened, a cold hardness prevailed over her whole body; nothing of human nature was left in her, but she became totally transformed into a pillar of salt, which is to be seen there to this day. Oh that the Jews had laid this miraculous

punishment

punishment to heart, then would they not have been so disobedient and stiffnecked. Such is the origin of that water, which seemed to you to shine so; and as a testimony that it antiently consisted of dry substances, consumed and melted into each other, along the shore grow apples of a very beautiful outside, but the inside is full of ashes; it is also sufficiently evident, without multiplying proofs, that this lake is compounded of various substances, mingled together by liquefaction, as not only the colour of it varies daily, but, contrary to the yielding nature of water, whatever is thrown into it, tin, iron, lead, instead of sinking floats on the surface.

Pilgrim. This is a wonderful history, indeed, Father.

Cleophas. And no less true than terrible: It is also a melancholy consideration, that Jerusalem, having such a striking instance of divine vengeance before its eyes, should not have taken warning: Then thou glorious Temple of Zion, thou palace of Solomon, had ye stood in all your splendor.

Pilgrim. As you have frequently mentioned the destruction of this city, I could wish to know by what means it came to pass.

Cleophas. You must know, Son, that the tempest, which has deluged the city and country, was preceded by some drops. First, the Emperor Caligula, about six years after Christ's passion, affecting to be worshipped as a deity, would have an image of himself set up in the Temple. It is impossible to express the emotions of the Jews at this order. They went in a body, wringing their hands, and filling the air with dismal cries, to Petronius, the Emperor's General, intreating he would defer it; and, on his threatening them with death as rebels, they one and all held out their necks, and declared themselves ready to die, rather than see such a violation of their Temple. In short, such was the dejection every where, that, for full fifty days, the culture and sowing of the lands were utterly at a stand; and it would rather have increased than abated,

had not the Emperor died, he having threatened to make an example of them for their superstitious refractoriness, as he called it. Thus was rewarded the cry of the Jews to Pilate, "We have no King but Cæsar." Oh, how gladly would they now have accepted of the meek Jesus for their sovereign! Afterwards, on the feast of the Passover, Cumanus being Governor of Judæa under the Roman Emperor Claudius, one of the Roman soldiers, on duty at the castle of Antonia opposite to the Temple, threw off his cloaths, and, in contempt of the Jewish religion, turned his back parts to the people, who were going in multitudes to worship. This shameless insult raised a great disturbance, and some were so irritated that they threw stones among the soldiers, who standing on their defence, the tumult in the flight was such, that above ten thousand persons were trampled to death, which naturally filled the city with lamentations and discontent. Another time, a soldier burnt the books of the sacred Scripture; and a Jew, coming from Galilee to the feast of the Passover, was murdered in the country of the Samaritans; and Cumanus not animadverting on any of these misdemeanors, the Jews resented it so far as to break out into an attempt of doing themselves justice, with fire and sword. Cumanus, assembling the soldiery, took several of the insurgents, and put them to death as fast as they fell into his hands. The country was overrun with confusion and slaughter, every man's hand being against his neighbour, without any prospect how these desolations would end; and Quadratus, Governor of Syria, coming with a large body of forces, made a terrible havock among the Jews, crucifying all the prisoners, except eighteen of eminent rank, whom he was pleased to behead.

Pilgrim. These eighteen seem to indicate the number of years the Emperor Tiberius had reigned at the time of the crucifixion of Jesus; and the crucified bore

bore the punishment of the prophane insolence with which that horrid act was accompanied.

Cleophas. That is not ill observed; for these, from their impetuous zeal for the Law, were among the foremost in crying out, "Crucify him, crucify him;" and it was their impetuous zeal for the Law, which brought them to such an end. But besides the preceding, terrible mischiefs were also committed by gangs of clandestine assassins, termed *Sicarii*, who, with poignards under their cloaths, mingling among the people, stabbed any on whom they had a design, and then, by a feigned concern at such doings, affected to know nothing of the matter. Nobody was safe from these blind murderers; even Jonathan, the High Priest, successor to Caiaphas, was thus made away with. You cannot imagine the consternation every body was under, at the frequency of these murderous practices; but it was no more than a just punishment, for having claimed the release of a murderer preferably to Jesus. Now received they the reward of that iniquitous preference. Others seduced the people into the wilderness, to assert their freedom against the tyranny of the Romans. Among these was a false prophet from Egypt, who, putting himself at the head of four or five thousand such murderers, infested the country, pillaging and burning it; and one town was at variance with another, so that the poor distressed people could scarce find any shelter; all which, as Jesus himself had foretold, were but the beginnings of affliction.

Pilgrim. Sad beginnings! But could not the great power of the Romans quell these insurrections?

Cleophas. No such thing. I have before said, that there is no striving against God. Felix, whom, about twenty three years after Christ's ascension, the Roman Emperor Nero had appointed Governor of Judæa, gained some advantages over these assassins, as did Festus after him. But what did it signify? The wrath of God was kindled against this city; as, in-

stead of amending, they continued the persecutions against the Apostles and believers, with all their former animosity.

Pilgrim. Aye!

Cleophas. Oh! I cannot give you any detail of all the evils committed by it. There was that chosen vessel Paul. About this time he ventured to visit the brethren at Jerusalem, as greatly wanting the supports of his presence. The Jews would not let him rest, till, after many outrages, they persecuted him to death. They hearkened to no vindication or apology; but clamoured, threw dust up in the air, and raved as if they would have torn him to pieces. The Roman Governors, who knew not the motive of this fury, interposed for the preservation of the public tranquillity; but neither Felix, Festus, nor Agrippa could appease these frantic zealots. They seemed impelled, by the righteous vengeance of God, to all manner of wickedness and cruelty. They persisted in their turbulency, till they got the Apostle carried to Rome as a malefactor. There, for some time, he went about bound, with a chain to one of his hands, by which a keeper led him when he went out; and, in the prison, he fastened it about his middle. They, however, were frustrated in their drift; for, so far from arresting thereby the progress of the Gospel, the letters written by him in his imprisonment were of infinite use for strengthening the faithful, and convincing unbelievers; yet they shewed, to the utmost extent of their power, that they were more cruel and unjust than the Heathens.

Pilgrim. Yes; but these may be supposed to have been only the refuse of the people, or, at best, the commonalty.

Cleophas. I must tell you, they were the very flower, men of eminence, the High Priests, Elders, Scribes, and such; for it is well known, as I have already said, that the High Priest Annas, four years after this, caused

caused that excellent man, James the Less, to be put to death. How, then, did it consist with divine justice to spare a city, which, against all admonitions, went on in the most impious enormities, heaping sin on sin, till its measure of guilt ran over.

Pilgrim. I perceive, all these things had a relation to the destruction of this city.

Cleophas. Yes; and the nearer the catastrophe, the more strongly were the prognostics marked. For in the fifth year of Nero, Albinus succeeding Festus in the government of Judæa, he proved a greater scourge to the country than the very assassins, sticking at nothing to gratify his insatiable avarice; even for a pecuniary consideration conniving at villainies of all kinds, which was productive of innumerable evils; every one, master of a sufficient bribe, openly perpetrating the most flagitious violations of the laws of society. The priestly offices also fell into wretched degeneracy; for the High Priest Ananias, who, with all his affability, his blandishments, and softness of behaviour, was but "a whited wall," had bought the countenance of Albinus; and his chief servants, in conjunction with notorious scelerates, besides other depredations, broke open the granaries, in which were lodged the priests' tithes, beating any who offered to expostulate with them; that many of the sacred order, deprived of their subsistence, perished in a most distressful manner. These calamities came thick on one another; and that it was God's absolute resolution to destroy Jerusalem, without a deep humiliation and real repentance, was farther manifest from seven most dreadful tokens, which he permitted, as warnings to every one, to come to pass in this city.

Pilgrim. You will be pleased to favour me with some account of them.

Cleophas. The first was a tremendous comet, having the appearance of a fiery sword, which continued blazing over the city for the space of a whole year. This

phænomenon struck with terror every one, except those who, from an obdurate infatuation, left no stone unturned to spread revolt, and, without regarding heaven, placed all their hopes in the continuance of the war. Afterwards, in the feast of Passover, about three o'clock in the morning, the temple was filled with a supernatural effulgence, which lasted about half an hour. During the same feast a cow, as it was going to be sacrificed, brought forth a lamb in the middle of the temple. The large brass door of the temple, which was every day shut by twenty men, about midnight opened of itself. Some days after followed a more dreadful sign than any of the foregoing; many bands of warriors being seen in the sky for several hours together, and, as it were, brandishing their arms over the city. At the feast of Pentecost was heard in the temple a violent crash, followed by a loud outcry, "Let us hasten from hence." Lastly, a peasant's son, named Jesus, at the feast of Tabernacles, suddenly, in a very solemn accent, cried out, "A voice from the rising of the sun, a voice from the setting, a voice from the four winds, a voice concerning Jerusalem and the temple, a voice concerning young married men and married women." These vociferations he continued night and day. Though often beaten and scourged, he ceased not to cry, "Woe, Woe, Jerusalem!" and more especially on the high festivals, when the city was full of people. After a daily repetition of such warning exclamations during seven years and five months, that is, till the city came to be besieged, (as I shall soon relate to you,) he went upon the city wall, and, raising his voice in an extraordinary manner, called out, "Woe to the city, woe to the temple, woe to the people, and woe also to me;" which words he had no sooner uttered, than an arrow from the enemy's camp laid him dead: A remarkable token that his warnings were originally of divine inspiration, as a sure prediction of the impending visitations.

Pilgrim.

Pilgrim. These were dreadful signs, and I suppose that many were moved by them to withdraw out of the city.

Cleophas. No, no; there were not wanting persons of high repute for learning, who put flattering constructions upon these portents, that I never heard any left the city except the brethren, now distinguished by the appellation of Christians; who, remembering that Jesus had foretold the certain ruin of the city, and charged them, when they saw the beginnings of these afflictions, to depart out of Judæa, successively removed from this country to beyond Jordan, in a town called Pella, where, amidst all the commotions of the state, they led a quiet life, as in a safe shelter from sultry heats or piercing storms.

Pilgrim. All this I well understand. Now, if you please, for an account how, according to these signs, the troubles came on.

Cleophas. Albinus was succeeded in his government of Judæa by Lucius Florus, in the ninth year of Nero, and thirty two years after Christ's ascension. He was rather worse than his predecessor, and, as it were, strove to inflame the combustions of the Jews, of themselves so vehement and resolute in their revolt that they spurned at all mediums for an accommodation. Thus, on a disturbance at Cæsarea, a sea-port, between the Jews and Pagans, Florus took eight talents from the Jews to espouse their cause, in which he baffled them; and some, to retort the injury, by way of ridicule carried about a basket, as making a gathering for Florus; who, flaming with indignation, came to Jerusalem with a military force; and when he was met with all the marks of respect, he ordered his attendants to disperse those hypocritical rebels, so that they ran back into the city under the most terrible apprehensions. The new Governor went directly to the hall, whither having cited the principal mutineers, he severely threatened them. He gave the upper town,

which stood on this hill, to be pillaged by his soldiery ; then proceeded to a massacre of the citizens. Many of the nobility and persons of rank he even crucified, contrary to law, decency, and the practice of all his predecessors, who, amidst all their animosity against the Jews, still paid a regard to eminence of station and endowments. From this act of brutal cruelty he was not to be diverted, not even by the request of Berenice, King Agrippa's sister, who, to enforce it, presented herself before him barefooted, and in the most moving dress and attitude. At this the insurgents were exasperated to such a degree, that they openly inveighed against Florus, not without some menaces ; and though the High Priests interposed, sometimes mildly, sometimes authoritatively, their rage could not be appeased. Afterwards, convening the leading men among the Jews, he proposed to them, that if they would go out and meet with shouts of joy and felicitation a body of troops expected from Cæsarea, every thing should be made easy ; and the Priests and Levites, shewing the example with hymns and instruments of music, at length wrought on the people, for the sake of the Temple, to comply with Florus. But their condescension added fuel to the fire ; for the Roman soldiers returned their complement with mockeries and insults ; which the Jews not taking with silent patience, the Romans fell to stabbing and killing, and not a few were squeezed and trodden to death in crouding in at the city gate. What a horrible spectacle was Jerusalem now ! The Romans, with all their force, assaulding the temple and fort Antonia ; the insurgents as vigorously resisting, and from the tops of houses discharging all sorts of missile weapons, stones, firebrands, every thing that was at hand, that the Romans were forced to draw off ; and thus began the defection of the Jews from the Roman dominion. In the twelfth year of Nero, when about as many years were elapsed since the crucifixion of Christ as
amounted

amounted to his age at that dismal event ; and from this time to their final catastrophe, about as many years intervened as Jesus spent in going through Judæa and preaching the Gospel ; in which space, as he suffered from them the most malicious and cruel persecutions, so they, in the time we are now entering on, were visited with the most grievous and terrible calamities.

Pilgrim. They appear to be the appointed punishments of irreclaimable wickedness. Yet give me leave to ask, whether there were no particular persons of distinction who interposed, with all their authority, to extinguish the flames at their first bursting forth ?

Cleophas. Several. King Agrippa had it much at heart, and prevailed with Cestius, Governor of Syria, to call Florus to an account for his administration. Accordingly all the people joined in a heavy charge against him, proved his murders and setting houses on fire, of both which the ruinous condition and solitariness of the streets were visible evidences, and things seemed in a fair way of accommodation. Agrippa, in a long speech, advised the Jews to submit to the Roman power, as before it neither the kingdom of Macedonia, nor the famed states of Athens and Sparta, had been able to stand, and which had extended the wings of its dominion over Thracia, Illyricum, Germany, Gaul, Spain, and even beyond the Sea, into Britain ; to which also, in other parts, Egypt had yielded ; the savage Moors paid tribute, the mighty potentates of Asia did homage, and the invincible Kings of the Parthians sent gifts and hostages ; and no Sovereign was known, throughout the Globe, who durst measure forces with the Roman Empire : So that, if they valued what ought to be most dear to man, he advised them to desist from their designs, as the certain consequence would be the total destruction both of the city and temple. These words of Agrippa made some impression ; and others,

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to increase it, bad them cast an eye on their ruined houses and other edifices. But when the King began to recommend a quiet subjection to Florus, the tumult flamed out in all its former violence, so that the confederate of both parties dreaded the consequence, and the pacific King himself scarce got safe out of the city. Farther, there arose a haughty young man called Eleazar, son to Ananias the High Priest, and he it was who laid the chief foundation of the revolt, asserting that offerings were to be made only for Jews, by which were excluded the Emperor's offerings, though till now they had been admitted into the temple. Accordingly this was opposed even by the High Priests and Pharisees, who sent to Agrippa and Florus for a military force; which were dispatched accordingly: And now were renewed the former intestine fightings. The revolvers made themselves masters of the temple, the citadel of Antonia, and the King's palace, together with the city court of justice, which they set on fire, burning all the books, records, letters, accounts, and other memorials lodged there. In the upper town the contest continued for seven days successively, that the streets ran with blood; and this slaughter was heightened by the *Sicarii*, who, mingling with the weaker side, stabbed great numbers. The city every where rung with groans, lamentations, and outcries, and presented, on all sides, spectacles of bloodshed and desolation, without any prospect of assistance or a period. But all these horrors were sent on them by the hand of God. These afflictive circumstances might remind them, with what brutal merriment they had insulted over the sufferings of Jesus. Now their agitated consciences might tell them, that the innocent blood shed by the Pharisees was come to demand vengeance; for as, by an unrighteous sentence, they had shed the blood of many saints, so many of them were killed by the mere perverseness of the lawless

less *Sicarii*, as particularly was the fate of Ananias the High Priest, and his brother Ezekiah.

Pilgrim. But I am afraid, Father, that these fightings and bloodsheds were not limited to Jerusalem.

Cleophas. It was like a fire, which, beginning in the middle of the house, gains the walls, and spreads: For the Anti-Roman party every where hearing of these transactions, ran to arms, and seized on several towns, as Messadia, a very strong fortress; Macherunte, where John the Baptist was beheaded; Sebaste, Ascalon, Philadelphia, Ptolomais, Anthedon, Gaza, and others; burning some, garrisoning others, and never giving any quarter to the Roman soldiers. The news of these violences soon spreading through the country, the Romans in some places massacred all the Jews. Twenty thousand were killed at Cæsarea, thirteen thousand at Scythopolis, fifty thousand at Alexandria, ten thousand at Damascus; and Joppa being taken by the Romans, they spared neither age nor sex. You may conceive the outcries, the confusions, the miseries, and the bloodsheds which filled every place; the dejected farmer looking on his ravaged grounds, the tradesman exposed to open rapine, the artificer starving for want of employment, all sociality and friendly intercourse suspended, the streets and roads swarming with sanguinary robbers; and, what is still more horrid, in these fightings, one saw his father killed, another his mother, brother, or sister, without being able to give them any assistance.

Pilgrim. These things must have excited terrible reflections; but please to go on with the history of this devoted city.

Cleophas. Before they had breathed from these distresses, came Cestius Gallus, Governor of all Syria, with a powerful army towards this city, destroying and burning every thing in his march, that the people betook themselves to the mountains, with what little they could save, and made a most desperate resistance.

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The insurgents within the city, and many of the inhabitants, though terrified at the approach of Cestius, determined to sell their lives dear. The Roman pitched his camp on yonder rising ground, near two miles from the city, and after a rest of three days, marched to it, as if intending a storm: The revolvers, in their first consternation, retired into the inward quarter; and had not God decreed the total overthrow of Jerusalem, Cestius, with the help of the Roman party, might easily have quelled the revolvers, and thus the troubles had come to a period, with little detriment to the city. But Cestius, seized with a strange panic, turned back and fled from those who were afraid of him. The Jews eagerly pursuing, his whole army was in great danger, and he thought himself very happy in escaping within Cæsarea, and this not without considerable loss. This success so elevated the Jews, as to leave no hopes of things taking a peaceable turn; and many prudent persons hereupon left the city, as foreseeing its destruction to be inevitable, such a wild faction being in no wise able to make head against the forces of the Roman Empire.

Pilgrim. I find they imitated Lot, who, when Sodom was to be destroyed, removed from it. But the revolvers, were they void of all reflection? for, by what I can gather from your discourses, Jesus the peasant, even after the above success, still continued his monitory cry of Woe, Woe to Jerusalem?

Cleophas. Reflection! Far from any such thing; and as for Jesus, this success made him be looked on only as a brain-sick creature, or a factious liar, and he was as little regarded as the Prophet Jeremiah was, after the King of Babylon had withdrawn his army. The Jews strengthened themselves in all parts, and appointed commanders in the several departments. Joseph, a son of Gorion, and Ananus the High Priest in this city; Jesus the son of Sapha and Eleazar, in the country of Idumæa; Joseph the son of Simon, in Jericho;

John

John the Effene, in Thama, Lidda, Joppa and Emmaus; John the son of Ananias, in the country of the Grophonites and Acrabatenes; to Joseph the son of Matthias, who has written a history of these things, were committed upper and lower Galilee. All these chiefs were very active in putting places in a state of defence, providing for a vigorous prosecution of the war, and animating their men to a resolute behaviour. The country, however, during the short absence of the Romans, was miserably ravaged, by a large gang of banditti, under Simon the son of Gioras, a bold, turbulent desperadoe, who every where pillaged and burned villages, till the High Priest took the field against him, and then he joined the banditti at Massada, an impregnable stronghold, whence they made inroads all over Idumæa, that, for the public security, it became necessary to garrison every village: You must think, Son, in what a plight the country must be, in such times.

Pilgrim. That may, indeed, be easily conceived: But what measures did the Romans take?

Cleophas. The Emperor Nero was then in Achaia, where receiving advice of the defeat of Cestius, and the military preparations of the Jews to retrieve affairs in Judæa, he appointed Vespasian, a commander of distinguished reputation; who, collecting a numerous army from the neighbouring towns and countries, in the thirteenth year of Nero, arrived at Ptolomais, a seaport, facing the Land of Galilee: He was afterwards reinforced by a body of troops under his son Titus, so that the whole army now consisted of full sixty thousand fighting men, besides a mixed multitude of others. The coming of such a force filled all places with confusion. Here drums and trumpets were heard, ensigns displayed, and soldiers mustered; there was flying to the mountains, caverns and fortresses. Some, with fierce looks defied the Romans, and wished to come to blows with them; others were all dejection, fear, and
trepida-

trepidation, or rather in utter despair of safety, as indeed the danger was universal; for he who escaped the sword of the enemy might fall into the hands of robbers, which was full as bad. To go over to the enemy, or to side with the revolters, was the only alternative left; and great was the danger in both. Sephorim surrendered itself voluntarily to the Romans; but other towns, more determined, fell under the Roman arms; and first Gadara, where every soul was put to the sword. Jotapata was not taken till after a furious storm, as obstinately withstood, and in which forty thousand men fell before the sword was sheathed. Besides many, who hiding themselves in cellars and vaults, were murdered in cold blood, some killed each other; and some, from a horrid despair, or violent hatred of the Romans, put an end to their own lives. Here it was where the historian Josephus, after narrowly escaping from his own infatuated party, was taken prisoner; but, by a particular good fortune, his life was spared. The Romans, afterwards, every where victorious, reduced Tiberias, Taricheas, Gamala, Giscala, and other places; but many shocking circumstances attended these conquests; for the Jews were thrown into such desperation, that many slew themselves, and did not withhold their hands from their fathers, mothers, sisters, brothers, wives and children, and threw the bodies in a heap. This horrid spectacle was particularly seen at Scythopolis, and some other places. It is shocking to hear the extremities to which despair prompted them; their proceedings favoured more of phrenzy than a rational ardour for freedom, and in their countenances and demeanours they appeared like demoniacs; for these were the days of vengeance foretold by Christ: Happy, indeed, were the wombs which never bare, and the breasts which never gave suck; for inexpressible were the distresses of bewailing mothers, raving about the country with their little ones in their arms, or holding them

them by their hands. The banditti murdered them, and the Romans sold them as slaves.

Pilgrim. Dreadful times! But how was it, in the mean time, at Jerusalem?

Cleophas. The times were no less dreadful there, and discord made them worse; for the Zealots (or clandestine murderers) committed horrible havock in the city, ransacking the citizens houses and murdering the Nobility; in opposition to these, were the High Priest, and the whole body of the burghers: But the Zealots, to secure themselves, made themselves masters of the Temple, prophaned the sacred places, and, among many other acts of impiety, raised to the dignity of High Priest, an illiterate rustic of ignoble birth and coarse manners, and not of the Tribe of Levi, as the law directs. Ananus spiriting up the people to annul such an illegal promotion, a terrible fray ensued; first the stones flew as thick as hail; then the swords were drawn; and great numbers fell on each side. The Zealots, however, being driven into the innermost part of the temple, six thousand of the townsmen were posted for the defence of the several gates. In the mean time one John of Giscala, a daring incendiary, under colour of reconciling the two contending parties, deceived the citizens, under hand calling in the Idumæans to assist the Zealots, alledging that Ananus's design was to deliver up the city to the Romans. Accordingly they appeared before Jerusalem to the number of twenty thousand; but the citizens, posted at the gates, opposed their entrance. Not long after, in the night time, happened a most dreadful tempest of thunder, lightning, wind, and rain, accompanied with shocks of an earthquake. The Zealots, availing themselves of the darkness and confusion, surprized the guard, and let in the Idumæans. Then followed a most deplorable carnage of the citizens; for there was no room for flight, being on all sides hemmed in by their enemies. The outer part of the temple ran over
with

with blood ; for, next morning, the number of slain was found to amount to eight thousand five hundred. Then, rushing into the city, they continued the slaughter among the citizens ; and, so far from sparing Ananias and the Priests, stripped their bodies, and left them exposed to the dogs ; that above twelve thousand more fell by the sword in the streets and houses. They killed whom they pleased, and trampled on law and justice ; for, having brought an indictment against one Zacharias, with a view of getting his substance into their hands, and he being acquitted, they immediately dispatched him, and the Judges narrowly escaped their rage. Such was the condition of the city, even before the Roman army sat down before it.

Pilgrim. Such horrible doings are enough to make one's hair stand on end. Well might the tender-hearted Jesus weep, when, in the Spirit, he foresaw all these calamities.

Cleophas. You may well say so, Son ; and there was, besides, this misfortune, that it was next to an impossibility to escape these ruffians ; as, on any sudden suspicion of a design, for self-preservation's sake, of going over to the Romans, they made no difficulty of murdering the party as a traitor, and it was also death to offer to throw any earth on such bodies ; which, besides the noxiousness and filth, was such a shocking spectacle, that the living accounted themselves more wretched than the dead which lay at their feet, as they saw their present distresses must end either in a loathsome prison or a harsh slavery. During these combustions, John Giscala, whose ambition was seconded by great finess, but infamous for a tyrannic disposition, formed parties to have the chief government of the city lodged in him ; but Eleazar, a man of greater interest, and much more deserving, being supported by some of the nobles and part of the Zealots, defeated his intrigues. This contest again set the city in a flame ;

flame; and both sides, as it were, strove who should exceed in rapine and murder.

Pilgrim. Well, but the Romans; I suppose they were not inactive all this time.

Cleophas. They were on their march to Jerusalem, and had easily possessed themselves of the pleasant and beautiful city of Jericho, it having been abandoned by most of the people, who sought safety among the hills and in caverns; as they, who had staid in the place, were put to the sword. Fifteen thousand Jews also fell in one battle, besides two thousand prisoners, and great numbers who threw themselves into the river Jordan and the lake of Asphaltus; that both the land and the waters were covered with dead bodies. Afterwards they took many other places, as Abyla, Julia's, and Besemoth; also, on the side of Jordan, they became masters of Lydda, Jamnia, Amaunta, and all the country adjacent; and now Vespasian, being come near Jerusalem, erected barriers, forts, and strong-holds, in order to secure all the approaches towards the city; and laid waste every thing round the walls, that the inhabitants had no resource left: Without, the Romans assaulted them; within, they were harrassed by the Zealots.

Pilgrim. But could not the revoltors, even then, see that their end was at hand, and that prudence required them voluntarily to surrender, without farther provoking the Romans by resistance?

Cleophas. They were too much blinded for any such thing; it also looked as if God, by a righteous judgment, permitted that blindness to rest on them, as hastening their punishment.

Pilgrim. I thought that their distress was increased, by the city's being invested on all sides by the Roman army.

Cleophas. Undoubtedly; but they made such slow work of it, that it seemed as if the city was to be longer a prey to the most dire calamities, before it should come

to an end. Oh, how happy had it been, if the Romans, at once, had fallen on them, even sticking the children on spears, violating the women, and laying every thing in ashes, as was the fate of some towns; then all would have been over at first; but even such good fortune was not reserved for them: Like as a patient, in whom there at times appears hopes of a cure, is sometimes revived by paregoric medicines, yet undergoes horrible tortures before he breathes his last; or like a delinquent, who has deserved death tenfold, and, as such, is sometimes put to the torture, then revived by being laid out in the fresh air, then again his tortures are renewed, and, at last, his flesh slowly torn with pincers, not allowing him the favour of death, till he has gone through many inhuman tortures: So was it with this city, as guilty of the murder of all God's Prophets: Its sentence was of a long continuance. Various were its tortures; slow fires were successively applied to it. First it was oppressed under Petronius the Roman Governor, then revived under Fadus, more severely tortured under Cumanus, had an interval of some ease under Felix, their grievances were increased under Albinus; again, Agrippa treated them with some clemency, but Florus exceeded all the cruelties of his predecessors. But it looked now as if the execution of the sentence was come, and that Cestius Gallus was to be the instrument; but his defeat gave a better appearance to things, though not without terrible convulsions inwardly, by the outrages of the *Sicarii*. Alas! a delusive hope of a cure only made them worse. Afterwards, Vespasian's coming was looked on as a tempest charged with final destruction; but it was no more than hacking off a man's head and feet, and leaving him thus lingering; for he was obliged to withdraw and return to Italy, some violent disturbances having arisen at Rome. The Emperor Nero ended his infamous life in the fourteenth year of his reign; Galba had seized on the Throne, but was dispossessed by Otho, who, being defeated

defeated by Vitellius, killed himself to prevent farther contests. Vitellius shewing himself unworthy of the Empire, Vespasian then thought it his duty to hasten home and restore tranquillity to his distracted country; and having dethroned Vitellius, was with universal applause proclaimed Emperor of Rome. Thus Jerusalem had a short breathing time, but, as I said, it was only for the increasing of its tortures, which now became greater than before.

Pilgrim. Is it possible!

Cleophas. Alas, it was as if God would scourge this murderous and impious city, without any mercy: For one Simon the son of Gioras, a robber of great power, who now had, as we have observed, kept himself a long time in the small town of Messada, impatient that the supreme command should be in another's hands, committed hostilities against the Zealots, who, sallying out against him, were totally routed and fled precipitately into Jerusalem. Then, marching into Idumæa with twenty thousand men, he over-ran the whole country, and took the town of Hebron, in which were great quantities of stores and provisions. This success greatly increased his numbers, who, by his command, every where marked their way with pillage and bloodshed, laying towns in ashes, desolating the country to such a degree, that the fields were no longer discernible from the roads. The Zealots, making another effort to check his career, took Simon's wife prisoner, whom they brought into the city with triumphant acclamations, conceiving he now was to be brought to any terms; but, appearing before the walls, he stormed and raged like a wounded wild beast, killing all who came in his way. Of those poor people who supported themselves by bringing into the city wood, garden stuff, and other necessities, he cut off the hands, and then drove them into the city; he threatened to break down the walls, and put every soul in it, young and old, to the sword. On this, though exceedingly exasperated,

they thought it adviseable to restore his wife. All the country people within Jerusalem fled from it. He laid close siege to the city; and the country labourers he surprized going into Jerusalem, so that he was more dreaded than the very Romans: But the Zealots within the city exceeded the abominations of either; for besides ransacking houses, violating women, and many other acts of licentiousness, dressing themselves in women's cloaths, with the richest ornaments, they furiously ran about the streets, stabbing all they met with poignards concealed under their finery, that the townsmen, rather than bear with these wanton cruelties, let in Simon, and made him their Chief. He instantly began with assaulting the Zealots in the Temple, thinking to carry all before him, but met with such a desperate resistance, that he was obliged to desist. In the mean time Eleazar, with his adherents, occupied the higher and innermost part of the Temple, from whence he assaulted John, as Simon did from below, that John had two enemies to deal with. By the daily frays of these three factions, which fought only from a mad ambition of who should be uppermost, the whole city became involved in blood and misery; they burned each other's grainaries, destroyed all provisions they could lay their hands on, killed not only their enemies but quiet citizens, who, disliking the proceedings of all the three factions, kept themselves neuter. They spared not the Priests, and the bodies of the slain they left unburied in the streets; nay, if a relation was seen lamenting over them, he or she was soon silenced with a spear, or scourged out of the city; so that it was every where as a slaughter-house, and a sink of all impiety and wickedness.

Pilgrim. Unparalleled horrors! But still I hear nothing of the Romans, who were to lay siege to the city as enemies to all parties.

Cleophas. Well, then, to return to the Romans. Vespasian, as we said, having settled things in Italy,
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and being proclaimed Emperor, sent his son Titus to reduce the remainder of the country, together with Jerusalem. The young Prince accordingly collecting a large army of several nations, came within thirty stades of the city; and having, with a guard of only six hundred horsemen, exactly surveyed every side of it, he pitched his camp, and drew a line which invested the city. Now the sanguinary animosity of the three factions was turned to consternation. The sight of the Mount of Olives covered with tents and glittering armour, and of the silver eagles, the ensigns of the Romans, silenced all tumults in the city. Nothing but terror was to be seen; some trembling at the danger; others wishing for death, as a deliverance from the approaching horrors; others wringing their hands, and lamenting their being cut off from returning to their friends who had remained in other parts; for it was then about the feast of Passover, when people from various countries, to the number of twelve hundred thousand, had resorted to Jerusalem. Imagine, then, what a turmoil must have been there! Without, they saw all flight intercepted by Roman forces, whose broad shields heightened the terror of their appearance; within, the first frights being now over, the three tyrants renewed all their abominations, wantonly massacring the strangers who had come to worship at the great festival. Some of the more aged might remember how, at the Passover, they had mocked Jesus, without in the least relenting at his sufferings; then would his words naturally occur to them, when, bending under the cross, he said to the insulting multitude, "If these things are done to the green tree, what shall be done to the dry." Could they have hid themselves under mountains, I dare say they would have run into them; but their destiny was to see their destruction gradually approach, Jerusalem, as Jesus had foretold, being encompassed with an army.

Pilgrim. These are remarkable things, indeed. But in such a dangerous situation, and the heads of the three factions committing insupportable outrages, did no body think of delivering up the city to the Romans?

Cleophas. Far from it. They were possessed with a notion that they defended the sanctuary of God, and on this account affected to be called Zealots, in imitation of those who had joined their forefather, Judas Maccabeus, and who had stood up in defence of the Temple. Accordingly, to answer their appellation, they made several sallies rather with the impetuosity of madmen than the regularity of soldiers, and drove the Romans from some of their works; yet, in the end, they were always forced to fly in confusion, and, after great loss, seek safety within their own walls. In these encounters with the Romans, the three factions acted in concert; but on any appearance of quiet without, they renewed their intestine broils, and arrows and stones flew like hail, besides very bloody close engagements; and these animosities continued till some attempt of the common enemy called for their attention; especially when the Romans had made the approaches, and plied their battering engines against the walls, every shock caused universal consternation: The stoutest hearts trembled. In this dangerous juncture Simon abstained from all hostilities within, John proposed to come to terms, and Eleazar closed with the two other chiefs, that thus they might more effectually oppose the Romans. Many were the sallies, skirmishes, and actions. Sometimes they amused the Romans with desires of a peace, pretending they would open their gates; but when they had thus drawn them under the walls, they discharged showers of stones and arrows at them. By such artifices they indeed killed no small number; but, at the same time, manifested by what spirit they were influenced, and what their boasted zeal was, which sought resource in perfidi-

perfidiousness, and could commit such enormities, that the very Pagans despised them for their breach of faith and flagrant immoralities, whilst they were filled with contempt of all other nations.

Pilgrim. Wretched blindness of man, which, hindring him from seeing his own corruptions, swells him with conceit ! However, omitting this, let us pass on to the sequel.

Cleophas. On the fifteenth day of the siege, which was the seventh of May, Titus, after an assault in which great numbers fell on both sides, carried the first wall ; and the city being environed with three, two still remained to try the valour and perseverance of his soldiers. In the mean time both Jews and Romans were under arms night and day, keeping themselves in readiness against any surprize ; but, on the fifth day, the Romans also took the second wall ; and, though the Jews recovered it, at length it remained in the hands of the enemy. It is terrible to think of the carnage on this occasion. After these successes Titus used his endeavours to induce the besieged to a peace ; and in the view of them all, the remaining wall, the towers and roofs of houses and other edifices being covered with people, he drew up his army, which made a splendid appearance ; and after some military rejoicings, each man, as they filed off, had a donation of money and provisions, whilst in the city there was nothing but want, famine, distress, and mourning. Yet, amidst these afflictive circumstances, which were every day growing on them, their pride would not permit them to surrender. Titus, however, hoped, that the increase of their miseries in the continuance of the siege would lay them under a necessity of submitting, and, being a Prince of excellent qualities, he deputed Josephus to reason with them ; but all his capacity and elocution could effect nothing. In the mean time, he did not omit erecting redoubts, and preparing engines for storming the third wall ; and even herein one of his views was, that the

Jews, seeing their last defence threatened, might be deterred from persisting in their obstinacy. But all his clemency was lost on them. No extremity of distress could prevail on them to come into his mild proposals.

Pilgrim. And certainly, among such a multitude of people, without any supply of provisions, the distress must have been extreme.

Cleophas. Oh, it was a dismal sight, indeed! All the corn was consumed. The revolted ran, like demons, up and down the city, rummaging houses in search of provisions, and unmercifully beat the masters of such where they found any concealed. If any one had a healthy complexion, with some flesh on his body, he was suspected of such concealment, and treated accordingly. The pining, the sick, and emaciated, they spared, as naturally drawing nearer their end. Several persons of fortune were known to give their whole substance for a measure of corn; the indigent lay expiring in heaps; and what any one had, he could not call his own; for houses were broke open, and pieces of flesh or bread wrenched, half-eaten, out of the eater's mouth. Women, with any bread about them, were instantly killed; and even children, after taking from them what little bits they had, were dashed against the stones. Boys and girls were spitted with a heated spit, or impaled, or otherwise most inhumanly tortured, to draw from them an information of any provisions concealed. All the ties of blood, affinity, and friendship were broken asunder by the severity of famine. If children had found any thing eatable, their mothers snatched it from them. Sisters and brothers practised the like unnatural rapacity. Every one was afraid of being observed to eat any thing; they sought some bye-place where, whatever it was, they devoured it raw. And, oh! how ghastly, how frightful the appearance of the living, with fallen cheeks, gnashing teeth, contracted lips, hollow eyes, shrivelled legs, tottering under exhausted bodies! Not
a few

a few sunk down in the streets, and there miserably expired. Dead women lay scattered on the flat roofs of the houses, clasping their lifeless children. The streets were covered with the miserable corpses of the aged. The young began to bloat, and walked as shadows or figures of death; and, to complete the horror, there was no burying the corpses. Such was the condition of the city when Titus offered them such moderate terms; and any, attempting to go over to the Romans, were sure to be immediately killed by the factions of John or Simon.

Pilgrim. Dreadful condition!

Cleophas. Some, I may say no small number, venturing out of the city to pick herbs or procure sustenance of any kind, seldom escaped being seized by the Romans, who fixed them on crosses facing the city wall. At this, the revolvers conducted to the battlements the relations of the persons thus exposed. There one saw his father, his brother, or his son-in-law, expiring amidst the tortures of a punishment, which of all others the Jews most execrated. How dearly were retaliated on them the sorrows which rent the hearts of Christ's friends and disciples, on seeing the agonies of their dying Lord and Master, whom this wretched people then insulted with impious rejoicings! Now, according to their rash imprecation before hesitating Pilate, his blood was on their children.

Pilgrim. Wonderful is the justice of God! Yet such calamities might really melt a heart of stone. And did Titus show no manner of concern at them?

Cleophas. He felt most tenderly for these his stubborn enemies. The before-mentioned apparent act of cruelty was only making reprisals, the frequency of which he hoped would humble their spirits; and the pains of those, thus executed, were shortened or abated. Titus, however, seeing that they were not to be wrought on by lenient means, threw up a line of circumvallation close to the city, that there was no coming

ing out to look for aliment; and, by the incredible dispatch of his soldiery, he saw it finished in three days; thus fulfilling the words of Jesus, "That the enemy should cast an intrenchment round the city, and distress it on all sides." Thus the famine increasing, and the streets being more and more strewed with dead corpses, some with their own hands gave themselves the death they had wished for, and some requested others to release them from a life of insupportable wretchedness; but the Zealots, particularly, mocked their misery, and left them to linger away the short remainder of the term, in the depth of anguish. Though corpses lay so thick in the street, the besieged had for some time thrown them over the walls in such numbers, as filled the ditches, to breed a pestilence in the Roman army. From the commencement of the siege, that is, from the fourteenth of April to the first of July, out of only one gate were carried a hundred and fifteen thousand eight hundred and eighty corpses, exclusive of those thrown over the walls, of which every day saw a great number, that the troops on both sides, in their motions, trampled over dead bodies: A shocking circumstance to those, who were not quite divested of humanity!

Pilgrim. I had imagined, the former distresses of Jerusalem were not to be exceeded; but these are horrible things, indeed.

Cleophas. Yes; never in the whole world had such calamities been heard of. Yet was it only a just punishment; as in Jerusalem had been committed the sin, of all others ever committed the most atrocious and detestable. But to draw on towards a conclusion: Titus set about building a very strong and large tower for storming the third wall; the other two he had caused to be demolished and razed, as the ruins still shew. For this work a great number of trees were felled; the finest olive, fig, apple, and other fruit trees; for, Son, the country round about Jerusalem was

was a perfect Paradise, with valleys of the most sightly trees, spacious gardens, where the great men and wealthy citizens used to take the air: But all those delightful places are now laid waste. Alas, how perishable are earthly things! When we least think of it, they come to an end! Little did King Agrippa imagine, that the heaps of beautiful, costly woods, which he procured for enlarging the temple, were to serve John the revolter to build towers and make works; and as little did the planters of these alleys, gardens, and groves, apprehend that ever they should furnish Titus with materials for storming the city. All the preparations being finished, the assault was begun with all the vigour human nature is capable of, and the Jews fought like those, whose all is at stake; particularly from the castle of Antonia, hurling javelins, spears, stones, fire, pieces of iron, and any thing that could annoy the enemy: But the Romans, covered by their shields, having undermined the wall, battered it down with one of their engines, called a ram. Their exultation at this success was not a little abated, at finding another wall raised within; but the passionate exhortations of their beloved Prince revived all their noble ardour, the Generals emulously animating the soldiery by their example, and many fell in the prosecution of the attack on the new wall: Yet the Jews kept possession of it. But two days after, twenty soldiers, having found means to climb over the wall, stabbed the guards, took the castle of Antonia, pursued the Jews into the Temple, which now rang with the sound of trumpets, mingled with groans and shouts; but after a sharp dispute, the Romans were obliged to rest satisfied with having made themselves masters of Antonia castle.

Pilgrim. This itself seems to have been no inconsiderable advantage.

Cleophas. Soon after, a Roman Commander having, with great loss, miscarried in an attack on the Jews, Titus again made them offers of peace by the mediation

tion of some Priests; but these being rejected with many contumelious circumstances, Titus ordered the Temple to be stormed in the night. Here again ensued a terrible slaughter; especially of the Jews, who, deceived by the obscurity, slew each other in great numbers; and afterwards, having with the most obstinate bravery sustained several assaults, they set fire to the out-works of the Temple, and thus themselves had the first hand in destroying the Temple by fire; and, farther, by way of stratagem, they filled a certain part of the Temple with dried wood, sulphur, pitch, and other combustibles, then, feigning a flight, drew the Romans into a dreadful snare: For, setting fire to those materials, their enemy became suddenly surrounded with flames, in which some perished, others killed themselves by leaping down, and others had recourse to their swords, as the more eligible death. This was a dreadful reverse to the Romans; yet far worse the condition of the Jews, as now, not only the common people, but the insurgents of all ranks were driven to such want, that they ate thongs, straps, shoes, any leather they could come at, even that of their shields; they bought even rotten hay at a penny an ounce; and now natural affection was so far extinguished that mothers were detected in boiling their own infants, and eating them.

Pilgrim. Unheard of inhumanity! Can such a thing be?

Cleophas. There was more than one instance of such barbarity; one of the most remarkable was a woman of quality, named Mary, who was surprized, eating one half of her child, which she had boiled, and the other half she shewed to those whom the smell had drawn to the place. As such a horrid action soon spread over the city, it was filled with weeping, wailing, and all the most passionate transports of grief and execration. Nothing was heard but imprecations against the Romans, and wishing for immediate death. It is even

even said that Titus, on hearing of these unnatural murders, cried out, extremely affected, "The sun shall no longer shine on a place, where the obstinacy of the men forces the women to such nefarious crimes." But they had crucified the Lord of Glory; they had rejected the offers of salvation; they had persecuted, with every kind of torture and distress, the messengers of God; they had slighted the days of grace: And now were come on them those days, when the cry was, "Blessed are the barren, and the wombs which never brought forth, and the breasts which never gave suck." I am really tired of enumerating the distresses and enormities of this wretched city. They incline me rather to weep than talk.

Pilgrim. I believe so, Father; yet I could desire to hear the catastrophe of this stiffnecked people, and the destruction of a city, the ruins of which are so very beautiful and stately: Therefore favour me with some general account. Minute particulars we will omit, in regard to your age.

Cleophas. Titus, seeing that the revolted were not to be driven out of the upper Temple, though very desirous of saving both the people and Temple, found himself under a necessity of setting fire to the gates of the outer Temple. This, indeed, alarmed the Jews; yet the Prince, still inclined to save that sumptuous edifice, gave orders for extinguishing the fire; and prepared to reduce the besieged by assault. Thus the humane Titus, (God's decree concerning Jerusalem being unknown to him,) tried every way to save the Temple and city from farther destruction. But the issue proved otherwise; for a soldier being lifted up by some of his comrades, threw in a firebrand at the golden window, whilst another had previously conveyed fire under the threshold, that the flame began to blaze on all sides. Then followed dismal outcries from those within; seeing the Romans putting all to fire and sword, and rushing on towards them with menacing looks. The Emperor,
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who was without, seeing the flame, called out to extinguish it, sent away his guards to hasten the execution of his orders, drew near himself, urged and threatened; but it availed nothing; he was either not heard or not regarded. Oh! this was a dreadful day; the blood ran down the steps, and dead bodies were hurled down to impede the besiegers. Such were the shouts and outcries, the vociferations of despair and triumph joined to the clash of arms, that the neighbouring mountains were shaken; and when the Emperor had given over his fruitless exclamations, every one threw fire into the Temple with as much eagerness as if ordered. Here melted gold was seen to stream down; there beams, loosened from their mortises, were falling. Yonder vast stones, all covered with smoke, came tumbling down. These were soon followed by the sinking in of a great part of the roof, which, with a noise dreadful as its effect, destroyed the altar, so often imbued with the innocent blood of the saints. No heart can conceive the universal phrenzy of the Jews of all sects and factions, at seeing their sanctuary thus crushed to a heap of undistinguished rubbish. Their wild lamentations animated the Romans, who now slew all they found, old and young, guilty or innocent, man, woman, and child. Some threw themselves into the fire. At the altar, a body of Priests, intrepid through rage, made a stand with spits, leaden stools, and other utensils. Others, to the number of above six thousand, retired into the forepart behind a wall, where they were all burned or crushed; every thing successively gave way, the golden covering sunk down, and the side walls fell; the smoaking beams warped, till with a roaring crash they burst from their positions. Thus at once fell the glory of Israel, the Temple being burned on the tenth of August, the very same day it underwent the like fate from Nebuchadnezzar, 680 years before; 1130 years after the building of the first Temple by Solomon, and 616 years from the building of the second by Zorobabel.

Zorobabel. What miserable times ! You will own that I have related to you many memorable things, and which call both for our grief and admiration ; for in all, God's righteousness is displayed, as we observed in the course of the relation.

Pilgrim. It was, indeed, a just vengeance, and not to be dispensed with ; for they seemed as if driven, against all manner of reason, to persist in wickedness, to the very extremity of guilt and impiety.

Cleophas. That may well be said, for among them were false Prophets, who, by vain promises, diverted them from an accommodation with the Romans, and buoyed them up to the very last.

Pilgrim. A strange blindness, not to see into their deceptions after such frequent experience ! But now for the catastrophe of the city.

Cleophas. After the conflagration of the Temple, the remainder of the Jews, together with the insurgents, intrenched themselves in one quarter of the city, and refusing to submit to Titus's clemency, the Romans renewed their assault with firebrands and combustibles. Thus the castle of Acra, the council-house, the stately structure of Ophla, Helena's palace, with three or four more public edifices, were set on fire ; that the flames soon spread, and whole streets were in a blaze. All sorts of rich furniture were seen intermingled with the rubbish : The sealed parchments, the strong boxes, once the capital joy and solace of the proprietors, were now destroyed. The revoltors were still possessed of the upper part of the city ; and that, Son, stood on this very hill where we now are. Some were for surrendering, which Simon Gioras being advised of, massacred many of those who were so disposed, as traitors to their country. At length the Romans became masters of the whole city, and scouring it in detached parties, murdered every Jew on whom they could lay their hands, without any distinction, that in lanes the passage was stopped up with dead bodies, and

and this slaughtering owed its end only to the Romans being tired of killing; then they proceeded to bind those whom the sword had spared, and secured them in close confinement. Now those houses, which once had shone with silver and gold, and splendid furniture, exhibited only ghastly fetid, corpses; they who had refused burial to the holy martyrs, lay unburied and trampled on by the insulting soldiery; they, who had forbid the supplying necessaries to the Disciples of Christ, now died miserably of hunger and thirst; they, who had thrown James the Less from the pinnacle of the Temple, themselves frantic with fear and rage, leaped down into the flames of the blazing Temple; they, who had persecuted the holy Jesus to death, and had brought an indictment against Paul before the Romans, now met with their fate from the swords of the Romans; and lastly, that city, which had been a slaughter-house to the Prophets and Apostles of God, now was the slaughter-house of its own citizens.

Pilgrim. It is, indeed, remarkable; and, Father, I can assure you, that your narrative has not been lost on me. But in the excision of such an opulent city, I suppose the soldiery loaded themselves with booty.

Cleophas. That they were very eager after, rummaging and tearing down every thing where there was a probability of finding treasure. Besides torturing people for a discovery, and ripping up their bellies to come at any gold which had been swallowed, their avidity left not the most filthy places, the graves, and even putrifying corpses unsearched, and thus came at considerable sums; but the plunder of the Temple was beyond valuation. In their busy searches they found several of the leading *Sicarii* concealed, and, among the rest, John Giscala himself, who, with his associates, was perishing with stench and famine. Simon Gioras hid himself under ground, with a view, when the confusion was over, of creeping out and making his escape. But the justice of God defeated his scheme; for hunger soon obliged him

him to quit his lurking place: And now, being in great perplexity, he struck out a device for affrighting the Romans. He put on a large white robe, with a purple mantle, and a ring on his finger, and thus he stalked forth; at first it answered very well, and frightened many; but, on a nearer approach, he was discovered, and carried in his disguise to the Emperor, who kept him and his accomplices to grace his triumph.

Pilgrim. Thus, I perceive, wickedness ever meets with its match. No counsel or stratagem is of any avail against the Lord. But what followed before Titus left the city?

Cleophas. He caused it to be totally destroyed, and razed all the remains of the walls. Gates, towers, palaces, walls of the Temple, and other edifices were pulled down, that for weeks together the whole city was involved in a cloud of dust. Even the very Romans wondered at the strength and firmness of the buildings; for in many places their pickaxes and all their other instruments could scarce make any impression. The demolition, however, was not discontinued till they had levelled all the streets like a field, and here and there thrown the stones in heaps, now over-run with nettles, which at first you so much wondered at. Thus, as Jesus had foretold, when we were with him on the Mount of Olives, not one stone of the Temple was left on another. Three towers, namely, Mariamne, Phaselus, and Hippicus, were by Titus's orders preserved, as monuments what a strong city had been reduced by the Roman arms; and you still see how lofty and grand they appear, though now only a haunt of crows, owls, and bats. Thus, Son, you see this desolated city, which, from the time of Melchisedec, its first founder, had stood above two thousand years; and since its destruction it is now thirty seven years, for I was then eighty three years of age, and I am now very near a hundred and twenty; that I have seen it in its prosperity, declension, and ruins. I have, with mine own ears, heard its ex-

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cision foretold, and, with my eyes, have seen the dismal accomplishment of that prediction, which I have related to you at large. Likewise I have communicated to you what I heard from my parents, or have read in the sacred books, that you might have a complete connected account: And now I think I have fully discharged the duty of civility to you, with regard to your question which you asked me, with no little amazement, when, walking about the city, nothing met your eye, but heaps of stones, mossy ruins, broken pillars, grassy streets, burned walls, towers? and I would hope you also are entirely satisfied.

Pilgrim. Oh, Father, great is my obligation to you for all your informations. I now perceive, that I needed not to have wondered so much at these heaps of stones overgrown with nettles, at these ruined edifices, nor at any thing else which I see here. I wish my memory may faithfully retain what you have been at so much pains in relating to me, and every thing in its order and succession of time; at least the substance, I hope, I shall never forget. But, however amply you have answered my first question, and thus removed my amazement at these ruins, yet I find in myself a great curiosity of knowing what farther befel the Jews during the course of the thirty seven subsequent years.

Cleophas. You should allow me some rest. My heart is perfectly pierced at rehearsing the calamities of my countrymen: And would you add to my anguish, by urging me to a farther recollection of this afflicting subject?

Pilgrim. Father, I sympathise with you most heartily. You never have shed any tears, but mine have stood in my eyes; and the emotions I observed in you, have frequently affected me in a very strong manner. Yet, methinks, I should not part from you thoroughly satisfied, without being made acquainted with what followed. Who knows what improvement and benefit may be reaped from such knowledge?

Cleophas.

Cleophas. Benefit being what you have in view, I will re-assume the thread of my story. The remainder of the inhabitants of Jerusalem, to the number of ninety seven thousand, Titus carried away prisoners. Imagine the wild melancholy looks; some missing their fathers, some their mothers, some their wives, some their children, some their brothers; their city and country desolated; and themselves dragged bound, between fierce lions, whose rage their obstinacy had kindled, and expecting nothing but death or slavery, which, indeed, proved their fate; some, in the public shews of the Romans, being thrown to wild beasts; some compelled to fight body for body, till one was killed; some were to run through fire, till the flames disabled them; some put to other ignominious and cruel deaths. The handsome youths and girls were reserved for the triumph, whilst the others were sold as slaves, and so cheap, that one small silver piece purchased thirty Jews: A just punishment for having, with thirty such silver pieces, bought Jesus, whose worth was above all worlds! In every town the Jews were hated, insulted, and sometimes openly killed. The Roman commanders, whom Titus left in Judæa, reduced the whole country, and made themselves masters of the fenced cities, as Macherunte, where John the Baptist was beheaded. The innocent blood of that harbinger of Christ seemed now to cry for vengeance; above three thousand Jews being there put to the sword in a wood, in endeavouring to escape. But at Messada it was still worse: For being, with their chief, Eleazar, reduced to the last extremity, they, at his instigation, first murdered their wives and children, who stood before them trembling and crying, then fell on one another, at the same time setting fire to the town; that all the Romans found in this wretched place was a heap of ashes and rubbish covering sanious carcases, except a woman and five children, who had secreted themselves. Thus was the

whole country subdued and brought under the Roman dominion. Simon the son of Gioras, John, together with several of their most active partisans, were carried to Rome, and exposed to the hootings of the people at Titus's triumph. Simon, after being dragged through the Forum, or market place at Rome, was bastinadoed and executed. Thus ended the glory and power of the Jewish nation.

Pilgrim. But have they no hope that, one day, the city of Jerusalem and the Temple shall be rebuilt, and shine in their former lustre, as after the Babylonish captivity?

Cleophas. They are in expectation of something of a Messiah, who is to restore their kingdom; but it is all delusion: For already several designing impostors and fanatics have appeared, pretending to be the deliverers of the people, and were joined by no small numbers, but it always came to nothing and ever will, for the prediction of Daniel standeth sure, "That to the consummation of things, the rain shall pour on the desolate city." Then Jesus, who is the true and the only Messiah, and whom they rejected, has expressly declared, "That their houses shall be left desolate;" for such kingdoms God will not restore. His kingdom is a heavenly kingdom, which endureth for ever, and where all believers shall be gathered together. This is our credence, hope, and consolation; this is all we look after in this world; whilst the Jews, in their ambitious expectation of another monarchy on earth, will be utterly disappointed. Remain they shall to the end of the world, but never recover their ancient kingdom. No promise of temporal grandeur is made to the people of God; their portion here seems to be contempt, distress, and persecution. It is the road Christ has trod before us; and very little else have we, his followers, met with in our pilgrimage.

Pilgrim. What do you talk of persecutions, Father? I concluded there was an end of all such violences, on the
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the overthrow of the Jewish kingdom. Have there, then, been any other tyrants, than among the Jews? I thought that they only were God's enemies, and Jerusalem had been destroyed purely on that account.

Cleophas. How! have you forgot; I told you we were slaughtered like sheep by the Roman Emperors, and that many of the Apostles had suffered in the Pagan countries? The Jews, indeed, were the first incendiaries, and their guilt the greater as the divine light had shone among them; but their rancour communicated itself to the Heathens, who showed us no mercy. To think what numbers suffered martyrdom under that savage tyrant, the Emperor Nero, who was the first Pagan persecutor, then under Domitian, and now again under Trajan! It is impossible to give a detail of the several cruelties exercised by Nero's insatiate rage. First, out of mere hatred and enmity to the Christians, he set the city of Rome on fire, and played on the harp whilst he was viewing the conflagration, then gave out that it had been a plot of the Christians, as a pretence for persecuting them; and persecuted they were with unheard-of inhumanity. It was a branch of the public games to let wild beasts loose against them. Sometimes they were sewed up in the hides of beasts, and thus torn to pieces by dogs. It is certain, there never was a more sanguinary wretch than this same Nero; he caused his mother Agrippa to be ripped up, and put to death the celebrated Seneca, once his tutor, with many more of the principal men at Rome. Such wanton cruelty lessens our amazement at his procedures against the Christians, or that he should condemn the holy Apostles to torturing deaths, or that, by his command, Paul, that zealous servant of God, had his head struck off by a sword, on the road to Ostium; or that he should confer rewards on any, who apprehended or murdered any Christian distinguished for rank or abilities. His own nearest relations, his most

faithful friends fell victims to his suspicions, or even his humours: Then what could Christians expect?

Pilgrim. You mentioned Christians being sewed up in the hides of beasts; but this was a wild beast in the figure of a man.

Cleophas. We had no better treatment from Domitian; who, in his youth, shewed a cruel turn of mind, amusing himself with stabbing flies with a needle; and, in his riper years, he was never better pleased than at seeing executions, and those generally very iniquitous and cruel, but chiefly executions of Christians; and in him this was not more the effect of cruelty than arrogance: For, affecting the title of Lord and God, he could not bear that any other should be styled so; and the Christians refusing to comply with his pride, as it is only to Jesus Christ that such an appellation belongs, his fury in destroying them became the more violent. He likewise endeavoured to extirpate every one of the lineage of David, with a view to prevent the coming of the true Messiah, whom the Jews still expected from that family. Some were burned, some hanged, some crucified, some flayed, some broiled, many were scorched to death in a brazen bull, particularly the good Antipas at Pergamus; and John, the last surviving of the Apostles, was boiled in oil; Timothy, who had been such a diligent assistant to Paul, was stoned to death in the Temple of Diana at Ephesus. Some, as Attilius Glabrio, at Rome, were set to fight against wild beasts. To be only banished, or driven from one's home, was a particular favour; and this was the case of Ignatius, bishop of Antioch; he has ventured to return to his flock; but so many snares are laid for him, that it is much to be apprehended he will soon come to a violent death; for he is an undaunted follower of the Apostles, in the holiness of their lives, and zeal to propagate the truths of salvation, and, I am sure, will readily partake of their most severe sufferings. It was after such excellent men that
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the strictest search was made. Flavia Domicilla, his own sister's daughter, was banished, with a mixed multitude, to the island of Pontus; and the Apostle John, after his miraculous deliverance from the cauldron of boiling oil, was obliged to abscond in the isle of Patmos: Some were condemned during life to the mines, or other hard labour, which was a cutting stroke to their wives and children, as now, for ever, deprived of their husbands and fathers. The Jews also were so oppressed by this merciless Emperor, that they had scarce a basket left to go a begging with; and happy was he who had a truss of hay to sleep on. But this was nothing, or rather indulgence, to what the Christians suffered; many were dragged from their beds to execution; others wandered about the deserts, lived hid in caverns, amidst hunger, thirst, and every distress, clad in sheep and goats skins, as the refuse and off-scouring of the earth. Oh, Son, were I to enter into a detail of all his horrid acts of inhumanity, the strange sufferings invented against Christians, it would take up many days.

Pilgrim. It is melancholy that man is susceptible of such depravity: But pray, Father, did these tyrants die peaceably in their beds?

Cleophas. Nero, in the fourteenth year of his reign, but when not thirty two years old, execrated by all, and understanding that there was a design against his life, in despair stole out of the city and stabbed himself. Domitian, after sitting twelve years on the imperial throne, was murdered in his palace, whilst reading a letter delivered to him by the assassin; and such was the abhorrence of him, that his name was erased out of all records, and the statues erected in honour of him every where pulled down.

Pilgrim. Did this put an end to the persecutions?

Cleophas. Under Nerva, his successor, the Christians had a short respite. He was a most mild and gracious Prince. All exiles were permitted to return,

than which nothing could give greater joy to Christian churches and families. The venerable John returned from the island of Patmos to Ephesus, where he was received with the warmest effusions of love. Ignatius again saw himself within his beloved Antioch. Thus also they, who had been condemned to the mines, and forced to seek refuge in deserts, now interchanged embraces with their joyful families, thanking and praising God. But, alas, of short continuance was this joy! For scarce had this good Emperor reigned a year and a half, when he was succeeded by Trajan, who now sits on the throne. Under him the persecutions have broken out in all their former cruelty; there is the same killing, burning, and hanging as ever; not a day passes, but we hear of such a one put to the torture, another imprisoned, and all his substance confiscated; another burned, another beheaded, another crucified, and so on; and this having already been the course these eight years past, we can scarce hope for better times; that is known only to God, in whose hands we are. As for us, we hold ourselves daily in readiness for whatever may befall us.

Pilgrim. Is this Emperor, then, such a tyrant as those you were speaking of?

Cleophas. That is not an improper question; yet it must be answered in the negative; for, as to morality, he is as good an Emperor as ever can be.

Pilgrim. That surprizes me, for I cannot reconcile the persecution of innocent people with goodness.

Cleophas. You must know, Son, that the world, in the height of its wisdom, cannot comprehend the mysteries of God. This Emperor is possessed with a prejudice, that we are a profane set of people, because we do not worship the Gods of other nations: You remember what Noah told you of the beginning of idolatry; you have also heard from me, that several famous nations have paid divine worship to Jupiter, Venus, Pallas, Vesta, Saturn, Pluto,

Pluto, and many more, as divinities; and this, Time, by the addition of entertaining fables, has so rivetted in the minds, that Temples have been erected, and sacrifices offered to them, as over-ruling the world, and conferring on mankind the favours, which they, in reality, derive from the one God, the Creator of Heaven and earth; and for our ascribing these to the only God and denying those fictitious divinities, we are persecuted as a profane generation. Accordingly, on any public calamity, as a pestilence, famine, earthquake, frequent fires, or long continuance of unseasonable noxious weather, the blame is laid on us. All this, they say, is owing to the Gods not having their due offerings; they are offended at such neglect of them, and therefore are we punished. To such false prepossessions, it is owing that we are despised and hated by all men; and that magistrates, otherwise worthy men, such as, for instance, is this Emperor, think it a point of duty to persecute us.

Pilgrim. But does not your mortified life, and your holy walking, evince the falsity and injustice of such prepossessions?

Cleophas. Our enemies have been very industrious to paint us in the very worst colours, and throw at us all the slander human malice can invent. They give out that in our societies, which are often held by night, many abominable transactions are committed, and this imputation the Pagan Priests are not wanting to second, with aggravations, before their magistrates; of whom, however, some, who were not for taking things on trust, found, from their own observation and enquiries, the case very different; and it is but very lately, that Pliny, Governor of Bithynia in Asia, wrote to the Emperor in commendation of the Christians, and even expresses his admiration of their innocence, purity, and philanthropy: "They hurt nobody (says he,) they have a custom of meeting early in the morning, and pray and sing hymns to their God; with many other com-

Commendable actions, and rules of behaviour; that he had, therefore, thought proper to suspend all severities against the Christians." The Emperor, hereupon, ordered, indeed, that no search should be made after Christians; yet, at the same time, that they who were in prison should be put to death. The persecutions, however, were not entirely discontinued, and if in any places they were relaxed, it was owing to the humanity of some particular Governors; those of a less compassionate disposition sometimes acted the hypocrite, and with much seeming concern would say, "It is the Emperor's edict which put you to death, and not I." Thus, under a pretence of duty to the Sovereign, many valuable lives were taken away, with circumstances of insult and cruelty.

Pilgrim. That was sad, indeed.

Cleophas. I should bewail them night and day, did not these sufferings also afford just matter of great joy.

Pilgrim. What joy can hanging, burning, beheading, and the like cruelties afford? Were it only confiscation of goods and banishment, can any one take pleasure in the tears of widows, and the ejulations of little destitute orphans?

Cleophas. The tears of us Christians bring advantages infinite with them.

Pilgrim. I own myself still at a loss to comprehend your meaning.

Cleophas. Son, I have lived in several persecutions; I have also seen intervals of quiet; and what was the consequence. The humility, the devotion, the mortification to this world, which persecution produced in us! We lived by moderate labour; our food, drink, and cloathing were plain and simple, and thatched huts our dwellings, as became those who professed themselves pilgrims on earth. There was no hoarding up of worldly substance; every one distributed his surplus among the poor; we kept open table with a cordial cheerfulness; we had our private meetings in woods,
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and sequestred pits and caverns; to be present at which we grudged no fatigue, rejoicing to see each other's face. Barns and lofts were more pleasing to us than all the magnificence of Solomon's Temple. Oh, the sweet offices of devotion which were celebrated, the heavenly raptures which swelled our hearts in those squalid places! Thither in their white vestments, emblems of their purity, came our Priests to comfort and instruct their flocks; and if any strangers felt the divine impulse, and desired to be incorporated with us by baptism, what tears of joy, what ecstasy, what love were seen throughout the whole society! All the powers of our souls had shaken off every worldly shackle and incumbrance; we stood in an habitual readiness, as it were, with our wings stretched out to take our flight to Heaven. Many have I myself known, who longed for their execution, as the blessed instant, when, delivered from this world of sin and sorrow, they should be transported to the converse of their beloved bridegroom Jesus Christ, that neither fire, sword, nor wild beasts could intimidate them. What do I say? intimidate; they were rather more stimulated to face those instruments of death and torture. Indeed to them they are only cathartic medicines against the corruptions of nature; and which, so far from answering the scope of our enemies, augment the number of Christians, that it is become a common saying, *The blood of martyrs is the seed of the church.*

Pilgrim. This was an attachment and ardour, of which mere Nature seems scarce capable; I hope it did not cool in the times of freedom.

Cleophas. Alas, no sooner were the persecutions discontinued, and edicts published, allowing Christians the unmolested exercise of their religion, than this intenseness began to relax. Security gave rise to various projects. One betook himself to trade, another bought a field, which he converted into an orchard, another turned farmer, and all eager to enlarge their dealings, and add house to house; others gave themselves up to
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other occupations; all alike slaves to the things here below. Then, instead of devotion and heavenly-mindedness, their thoughts began to turn on the elegancies of life, how much was required to support such a manner of living; then fortunes were to be provided for their children, that they might livelike themselves. In short, the mind became polluted perplexed, and incumbered. If, by the indulgence, our assemblies were more crowded, a strange coldness, inattention, and even some levity, was remarked; it was but too plain, that many came rather out of form and custom, than from any thing of a devout disposition; and brotherly love, for which we were remarkable, began to cool. They who before rejoiced to relieve their poor brethren, closed their hands; their love of money was more prevalent in them than the love of souls; gain was preferred to godliness, and poverty became a reproach; in short, the universal aim was to be rich; yet fatal to many did riches prove, exposing them to the enticements of the world. Christians began to court the favour of the great, to solicit for employments, to affect the fashions, to build fine houses, to vary their dress, to give entertainments, to hate, to envy, to wish, to hope, to fear, and all about these perishable things of sense; which, in the times of persecution, we did not esteem worth a serious thought. They, who before took joyfully the spoiling of their goods, would now have risked their lives, or, at least, have made use of any artifice or prevarication to save them: Humility, poverty of spirit, and patience, without which all religion withers or is vain, were thrown aside. You must think, Son, what a detriment this was to our holy assemblies, by the listlessness, the dissipation, the self love, the affectation of superiority, the contests which spread among us. The abovementioned, Pliny, who had ventured to write to the Emperor Trajan, in favour of the Christians, observing this degeneracy, advised him to indulge them in a full liberty, *and then they would fall*

fall away of their own accord! A deep fetched counsel! For, certainly, there is no poison so dangerous to incautious man, as ease, luxury, and a full fruition of this world.

Pilgrim. But your Ecclesiastics should strenuously preach against such excesses, and not give over till they are rooted out. They should exhort, urge, and threaten, that the people may, as far as possible, guard against those diseases of the soul.

Cleophas. Oh, Son, there is no want of that. We have as much preaching, exhorting, and remonstrating, as in the persecuting times. The sermons may be said to be more learned, the place of worship more large and commodious, and the congregations more numerous, than in the times of affliction. But what signifies all this? Ease rivets the love of the world in our hearts. The very Ecclesiastics themselves, one after another, slip into the mire. How many have I known, whose vehemence has turned to a supineness! Hands, which once wrote letters breathing a devout energy, are now taken up with books of accounts. The feet, which neither dark nights nor foul weather could detain from hastening to the meetings of believers, now assiduously tread the Exchange. The tongue which, like a torrent, poured forth the praises of God, now talks of news, bargains, and the worldly concerns of others. At the distributions, and our feasts of love, the poor sit confused and dejected, at the overbearing deportment of the wealthy, instead of the cordial sociability always observed on such occasions. Hence grudgings, envyings, and heart-burnings, a decay of benevolence, variances in the churches: And, did not God sometimes chastise his people with the sword of persecution, who knows to what lengths they might be carried by such earthly-minded Ecclesiastics, what innovations they might introduce, and whether a general apostacy may not be impending over us! Yet, I trust that God, being the Father of mercies, will preserve
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his church from so dreadful an evil; and that safety, and devotion, and ease, and piety, may kiss each other.

Pilgrim. But, Father, I cannot think that all your Ecclesiastics were infected with the contagion of ease.

Cleophas. No, no; that would have been very bad, indeed. I spoke only of the generality. I am not ignorant of the steady piety of some pastors, as Ananias of Alexandria, who died about one and twenty years since, and his successor Abilias, who, in the most dangerous times, behaved with unshaken magnanimity; and his death did not disgrace his life. He was succeeded by Cerdon, who now presides over the church there with exemplary piety. There is also Ignatius of Antiochia; I scarce know his equal for sanctity and a well-tempered zeal. With what affection, yet with what vehemence, he urges his flock to constancy in these triftful times? And he himself expects that, pursuant to the Emperor's cruel edict, he shall very soon be apprehended and dragged to execution. What shall I say of the good Polycarp, who, as successor to his instructor the blessed Apostle John, governs the church at Smyrna with most salutary wisdom? The church of Hieropolis is very happy under Papias and Quadratus, two bright luminaries, who communicate to them what they had heard from the Apostles, and what the Holy Ghost still performs by them, and with a paternal tenderness feeds them with the food of life. I need not enlarge on the character of Clement of Rome, a disciple of Paul, or of others, their care and diligence to walk in the steps of their predecessors being conspicuous to every eye. Oh, how beautiful are the feet of the prophecies walking amidst the churches! What elocution and erudition are heard there! How solemnly the remaining writings of the Apostles are read, together with the Epistles of glorious martyrs composed amidst the horrors of a prison! Such effusions of contrite tears! Such prayers and hymns! The serious preparations there made for the day of death, whatever it may be, whether

whether on a cross or a gibbet, in a fire or a bed. Oh, the hoary Apostle John, who has survived all the rest of that venerable band, and whom in my younger years I knew a boy ! How was I affected with his last admonition to his flock, whom he always termed his dear children, which was only *to love one another* ; and this, indeed, is the bond of perfection, as we daily experience among our sect. Happy me, if my sheep here, within this ruined city of Jerusalem, thrive under my care, as those of Smyrna have under his ministry. It is now seven years since they lament the loss of him ; and as for my discharge from the pastoral office, I hope the great shepherd will provide an able successor. The person I recommend to them is Justus, a man of indefatigable zeal and irreproachable morals : Long has he been my fellow-labourer. And now, Son, it is full time that I return to my duty over the little fold committed to my charge forty years ago, soon after the martyrdom of the blessed Apostle James the Less. I have already spent four days with you, and endeavoured to satisfy you in all your several questions ; the evening, being now pretty far spent, intimates to us to repair to our homes.

Pilgrim. It would be rude, Father, to detain you any longer ; yet I could willingly have asked a question or two about those apostolic writings, which you mentioned to be read in your congregations, who were the authors of them, and with whom they were deposited ?

Cleophas. You seem inclined, Son, to lead me on from one subject to another. They have been collected from various places, Corinth, Rome, Ephesus, Philippi, Colosse, and others, and lately digested into one volume. In four of them you will meet with a much fuller and clearer account of the history of Jesus than I have given you. The first is written by the Apostle Matthew ; the second by Mark, a disciple of Peter ; the third by Luke, a companion of Paul ; the fourth, which was not become public till about ten years ago,

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we owe to that aged Apostle John, as likewise a book full of mysteries, which he wrote during his solitude in the isle of Patmos. The other writings are in number twenty two, most written by St. Paul to the churches of those times, and carefully kept for the instruction of posterity. I recommend them to your perusal: You will therein find the truth of every particular I have told you, concerning our religion. Now be so good as to lend me your hand over these rugged heaps of stones, that I may return to my dwelling.

Pilgrim. Instead of wondering that your limbs are something stiff at your great age, I rather wonder that you are able to walk at all.

Cleophas. Yes, Son, you may easily conceive how it must be with such an one as I, who have lived in the reigns of twelve successive Emperors, being born in the thirty-first of that of Augustus, and was seven and twenty years of age at Tiberius's accession to the throne, under whom Christ was crucified, and the Gospel had its beginning in this unhappy city. In my forty eighth year Tiberius was succeeded by Caligula, the first author of the calamities in Judæa, and first persecutor of Christians. Three years after, Claudius came to be Emperor, and under him the Gospel was, every where, openly preached, and the Evangelical writings drawn up and transcribed. In my sixty fifth year began the reign of the unnatural tyrant Nero, whose cruelty discharged itself, in a very horrid manner, on the Apostles, the Christians indiscriminately, and the whole country of Judæa. My eightieth year shew the three reigns of Galba, Otho, and Vitellius; then began the reign of Vespasian, which lasted ten years, and stands famed for the total destruction of Jerusalem, and dispersion of the Jews, as I have, at large, related to you. In my ninetieth year, his son Titus, a Prince of excellent moral qualities, succeeded him, but before three years were at an end, he is supposed to have been poisoned by his brother Domitian, under

under whom broke out a most terrible persecution against the Christians in all places. In the hundred and eighth year of my age the good Nerva succeeded to the Empire, and under him we enjoyed an unmolested tranquillity; but in my hundred and eleventh year news came of the decease of that worthy Emperor; however, that the Crown had been conferred on Trajan, from whose virtues we might expect the like gracious indulgence. In the beginning of his reign St. John died at Ephesus: And it is now eight years since this *moral* Emperor has drawn the sword of persecution against it; when he will sheath it, is known only to Him who knoweth all things: But I, who have nearly reached the age of Moses, expect nothing but to die by the hands of violence, as Jesus my Lord; thus passing the same way into a blessed eternity.

Pilgrim. May all your wishes be answered, Father; long shall I think on what I have heard from you. These broken walls, these massy stones, these great eminences, with the foundations of palaces here and there projecting out of them, and chiefly those lofty towers, will often bring to my mind what you have told me of the frightful calamities and destruction of this city. Sion Hill will remind me of the Kingdom of David, Moriah of the Building of the Temple, Calvary of the Crucifixion of Jesus, Mount Olivet of his Ascension, the ruins of Bethlehem of his Birth, the broken Fountain Gate of his Entrance into Jerusalem, Bethany of his Abode, and the whole country of his Journeys; also of many circumstances, which you have related to me concerning the Patriarchs, Prophets, and Apostles: And how should I have known what all these things meant, had it not been for your kind informations? Great is the benefit and delight of conversing with men of age and wisdom; for your relations have not only eased me of the perplexity and amazement I was under, at the first sight of these grand ruins, but given me a clear insight of the course of the divine

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Providence,

Providence, both in the things which I heard from Adam and Noah, and those of which you have given me so perspicuous and so regular an account. I perceive God's Goodness in the accomplishment of the divine promises, his Wisdom in the œconomy of them, his Power in bringing to nought the mighty ones of the earth, his Justice in the punishment of the wicked, and, lastly, his unsearchable Mercies towards those who sincerely love and serve him. Your narrative will ever be a fund of edifying reflections to me; it will lead me from the shadow to the real substance; it will withdraw my affections from earthly, and raise them to heavenly fruitions. Thus, Father, being under the highest obligations to you, it is my fervent wish, though without any doubt, that you may shine in glory with Jesus, the hope of our salvation; also that, though now we are going to be separated in body, we may meet again in the mansions of eternal felicity.

Cleophas. Thank you, Son: And I rejoice in the benefit which you have already received from my Narrative; and I hope that, by reflection, meditation, and prayer, you will make a farther advancement, in order to which, I wish you every blessing from the Father of Lights, and the Giver of every good gift, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

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Books from which is extracted the Substance of these
DIALOGUES.

THE Scriptures.

Josephus's History of the Jews.

Egesippus's Destruction of Jerusalem.

Eusebius's Ecclesiastical History.

Nicephorus.

Baronius's Church History.

St. Augustin de Civitate Dei.

Pliny's Natural History.

Erasmus's Paraphrase.

Petrus Messias's Lectures.

Du Pleffis's Book of Nature.

Travels into the Holy Land, by different Authors.

Dictionary of the proper Names mentioned in the Bible.

The Dutch Chronologer.

Calvin's Harmony.

Mercator's Harmony.

Memorable Sayings.

Lives of Christ, by different Authors.

Several Dissertations on the Passion.